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Total Hip Arthroplasty Precautions

November 1, 2026

This is the rehabilitation plan I ask your physical therapist to follow after your Total Hip Arthroplasty Precautions. Bring it to your first therapy visit. It is a framework, not a prescription: your therapist adjusts the pace to how you are healing, and anything we discussed in the office takes precedence over what is printed here. If something on this page does not match what we talked about, ask me.

Operation	Total Hip Arthroplasty Precautions
Physical therapist	Please send progress notes to the office and call with any question about the plan.

Precautions for up to 6-8 weeks after surgery

DO NOT

- Sit in low, soft furniture because your hip will flex too much.
- Go on prolonged car rides - do stop frequently and stretch.
- Do not drive until cleared with your physician (usually 6 weeks post-op).
- Pivot on your operated leg.
- Sit too long (> 1/2 hour) and become overly fatigued.
- Take chances - be careful on uneven or wet ground.
- Squat, cross your legs or ankles - be careful when picking up objects and bending at the waist.

DO

- Sleep on your back for 6 weeks with a pillow between your legs.
- Use a walker or crutches bearing the amount of weight as instructed.
- Use a raised toilet seat, reacher and shower seat.
- Use TED hose for 6 weeks. If calf pain or swelling occurs, see your physician.
- Sit on a stool to garden and use a long handled tool.
- Keep housework light - no heavy lifting.
- Take frequent, short walks and get adequate rest.
- Continue your exercise program as directed by your physical therapist.
- Maintain a balanced diet to avoid weight gain.

If you travel by air, tell the security guards that you had a hip replacement - you may set off the metal detectors. Pick up an "Implant Card" from the Orthopedic Clinic.

Permanent precautions

- Avoid squatting.
- Carry loads (such as briefcase, groceries, etc.) on side of operation.
- Use caution when bending at the waist to pick up objects.
- Do not play sports that involve repetitive jumping and acceleration/deceleration such as basketball, racquetball, and singles tennis. Walking, swimming, and bicycle riding are better.
- Extended running is not advisable because of the stress on the implant-bone interface.
- Repeated climbing or horseback riding may be harmful.

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Total Hip Arthroplasty Precautions (continued)

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Sports after hip replacement

SPORTS NOT CONTRAINDICATED

Sport	Start	Return to previous level
Swimming	Pool aquatic activity at 6 weeks if wound healed	1 year
Bowling	3 months	6 months
Golfing	Chipping and putting - 3 months; Driving - 6 months	Ok to start at 6 months; Full activity at 1 year
Tennis	Doubles 6 months	1 year
Snow Skiing	Greens/Blues 6 months	1 year
Horseback Riding	3-6 months if experienced	1 year
Bicycling	Stationary (at home) - 2 months; Outdoor - 3 months	1 year

SPORTS / ACTIVITIES NOT RECOMMENDED

- Jogging / Running / Jumping
- Basketball / Football / Baseball / Soccer / Volleyball
- Waterskiing

Abbreviations

AROM / AAROM / PROM: active / active-assisted / passive range of motion. ROM: range of motion. ER / IR: external / internal rotation. ABD / ADD: abduction / adduction (away from / toward the midline). FLEX / EXT: flexion / extension. WBAT / PWB / TTWB / NWB: weight bearing as tolerated / partial / toe-touch / non-weight bearing. SLR: straight leg raise. HS: hamstrings. ITB: iliotibial band. UE / LE: upper / lower extremity. UBE: upper body ergometer (arm bike). BAPS: balance board. BFR: blood flow restriction training. PREs: progressive resistance exercises. D/C: discontinue. prn: as needed. POD: post-operative day. TENS: transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation. ADLs: activities of daily living.

Source

Adapted from William Beaumont Army Medical Center, Physical Therapy Section, "THA precautions WB08", Revised August 2008, published by William Beaumont Army Medical Center at https://william-beaumont.tricare.mil/Health-Services/Hospital-Care-Surgery/Post-Operative-Rehabilitation-Protocols (a work of the U.S. Government in the public domain).

Scan for the current version of this protocol, and the others, at aaronweymd.com/post-op-protocols
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