

Finding solutions to chronic hip pain

By Robert Rupp

When medications and other treatments don't help your hip pain, you may have hip arthritis. Surgery to replace the hip joint may be the answer. An orthopedic surgeon who has experience with hip arthritis will understand your frustration with the pain and be able to help you get back to living your daily life.



Robert Rupp

What is hip arthritis?

Hip arthritis is an inflammation of the hip joint. Your hip is a ball in a socket. When you move your hip, the ball turns in the socket. When the natural cushion between the ball and socket wears away, you are left with bone on bone. As the bones move together, the pain begins. Your body cannot repair bone-on-bone pain or replace the lost cushion between the bones.

How do I know if I have hip arthritis?

Common symptoms include:

- Swelling
- Pain

- Stiffness
- Inability to get up, walk, or climb without pain

Hip arthritis can cause permanent hip joint changes. Severe hip arthritis pain can become steady and not go away. You may not be able to continue your daily activities.

What can I do to for my hip arthritis?

If you think you have hip arthritis, you should see an orthopedic doctor to discuss your treatment options. Your doctor may recommend hip replacement surgery to lessen your pain and help you get back to normal daily living.

What is hip replacement surgery?

The procedure is called anterior hip replacement. The orthopedic surgeon will remove your worn-out hip joint and replace it with a new joint made of metal and plastic.

Anterior hip replacement surgery is different from the original hip replacement procedure. It offers many advantages:

- It is minimally invasive. The incision is smaller, and thinner needles are used during the surgery.
- The surgeon will not cut any muscles.
- The surgery is performed from the front of the body, not the backside of the hip. This approach better protects the hip joint.
- Your stay in the hospital will be shorter.
- You will have less pain after the surgery.
- You will feel more balanced when you stand up.
- You will have fewer restrictions after surgery, and you'll begin walking sooner.

You may be hesitant about having hip surgery. Take time to have a discussion with an orthopedic surgeon who can address your concerns. There are options to help you manage hip arthritis pain.

Robert Rupp is an orthopedic surgeon at Tahoe Orthopedics & Sports Medicine. In a wellness lecture on Nov. 1 he will be speaking for free about Minimally Invasive Treatments for Hip Pain at Lake Tahoe Community College's board room at 6pm.