

Self Help For Hip Osteoarthritis (OA)

Information for patients

What is OA hip?

Osteoarthritis is a condition that affects your joints and is common in the hip. When a hip joint develops OA, some of the cartilage covering the ends of the bones gradually roughens and becomes thin. Associated features include stiffening and weakening of the joint, surrounding muscles, ligaments and tendons.

Hip Joint



Risk Factors

- Being overweight
- Previous significant injury or surgery to the hip
- Genetic predisposition
- Age over 45 years old
- Very hard repetitive exercise or physically demanding jobs

Symptoms

Pain, stiffness, reduced function at the hip joint, weakness of surrounding muscles, creaking or clicking of the hip.

Prognosis/Outlook

It is impossible to predict how OA will develop for any one person. The severity of the condition does not determine the severity of the symptoms. In many cases the changes inside the joint do not cause much pain, or if there is pain, it can be mild and may come and go. Some of the changes, including stiffness and weakness, can be improved significantly by exercise. In some cases however, OA may progress to an extent that surgical replacement (Total Hip Replacement) may be recommended.

Management

- Weight loss
- Exercises to strengthen and stretch the hip joint
- Pain relief in the form of heat, ice, a Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS), anti-inflammatory gels, painkillers. Please seek advice from a pharmacist or GP as necessary for medication
- Aerobic exercise, such as gentle walking, swimming, or cycling
- Wearing supportive footwear to cushion the impact on the hip joint
- Establishing a balance between exercise and rest for example pacing your activity levels
- Use of walking aids, such as a walking stick

Exercises

Diagram	Explanation
	<p>To stretch the muscles at the front of your hip, use a chair for balance and lift your foot towards your buttock.</p> <p>Bend your knee so that your heel touches your buttock and you will feel the stretch on the front of your thigh.</p> <p>Hold the stretch for 30 seconds. If you cannot reach your foot wrap a towel around your foot to pull it up.</p> <p>Repeat two to three times, three times each day.</p>
	<p>To stretch the muscles on the inside of your groin. Keep your feet facing forward.</p> <p>Shift your body weight away from the side you are stretching and bend the knee on the non-painful side. You will feel the stretch on the inside of your groin.</p> <p>Hold the stretch for 30 seconds.</p> <p>Repeat two to three times, three times each day.</p>

	<p>To complete the buttock squeeze - lie on your back and squeeze your buttock muscles together and hold for five seconds. Repeat 10 times.</p> <p>To complete the exercise for strengthening the buttock muscles - squeeze your buttock muscles tightly together and slowly lift your buttocks off the bed/floor.</p> <p>Hold this position for five seconds without arching your back.</p> <p>Repeat 6-12 times, three times each day.</p>
	<p>To complete mini squats, try to keep your heels fixed to the ground and slowly bend your knees.</p> <p>Squeeze your buttock muscles and thigh muscles to push yourself up.</p> <p>Repeat 10 times, three times each day.</p>

Frequently Asked Questions

Is my mobility going to seriously deteriorate?

OA is a slow process which occurs over many years. In most cases mobility can be well maintained by following a regular exercise programme and following the advice of the self help guide.

What do I do if my symptoms do not get better and I cannot manage?

If your symptoms persist and start to impact on the quality of your life after following advice in this leaflet, please complete a physiotherapy self-referral form from your local GP reception.

This information is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages.

To request a copy, please ask a member of staff.

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