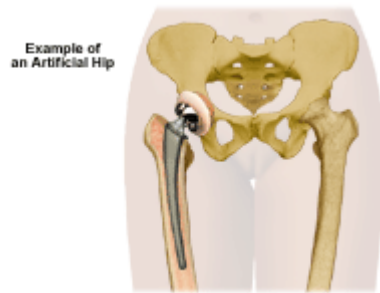


# Joint Replacement Surgery

## What is joint replacement surgery?



Joint replacement, a surgical procedure to remove and replace an arthritic or damaged joint with an artificial joint (called a prosthesis), may be considered only after other treatment options have failed to provide adequate relief from pain and/or disability.

More than 230,000 primary total hip replacements and more than 540,000 total knee replacements are performed in the United States annually.

## When preparing for joint replacement surgery:

As with any surgery, there are some pre-operative considerations to keep in mind, including, but not limited to, the following:

- **Autologous blood donation**  
Donating your own blood before surgery ensures a matched source of blood if needed during or after surgery.
- **Exercise**  
Our bodies tend to heal and regain function faster when they are in good physical and cardiovascular condition.
- **Medication**  
Before the surgery, discuss with your physician the medications you are currently taking. Some may need to be temporarily discontinued until after the surgery. Only this determination can be most appropriately made by your physician or orthopedist.
- **Discharge planning**  
As with any surgery, be sure to discuss discharge planning with your physician beforehand. Your discharge plan may include instructions on care of the incision, pain medications, activities, special exercises, and other home care instructions.
- **Rehabilitation**  
Persons who have received a total joint replacement can still lead functional, active lifestyles. One major component of many rehabilitation programs is exercise - to restore function, mobility, and strength to the affected joint and surrounding muscles. Discuss with your physician what an appropriate post-operative rehabilitation program should include.

Consult your physician for more specific pre-operative planning for your individual condition and type of joint replacement surgery.

## Possible complications associated with joint replacement surgery:

Although joint replacement surgery is successful in 90 percent of cases, complications may still occur, including, but not limited to, the following:

- wound infection
- infection around the prosthesis
- blood clotting
- malfunction of the prosthesis (may be caused by wear and tear, breakage, dislocation, or loosening)
- nerve injury (although rare, nerves in the surrounding area may become damaged during the surgery)

