

HIP ARTHROSCOPY SURGERY

The Operation

The hip joint is a ball and socket joint made of the top of your femur (ball) and part of your pelvis called the acetabulum (socket).

To perform the arthroscopy the foot is placed into a special boot and traction is carefully applied so that a 1cm space is created between the ball and socket.

Usually 2-3 small incisions (1cm in size) are made around the side of your hip. Through these holes, the arthroscope (camera) and surgical instruments are passed into your hip joint to perform the operation.

At the end of the procedure, local anaesthetic is injected into the hip to help with pain and the small holes are sutured with stitches.

Anaesthetic

Hip arthroscopy is performed under general anaesthetic (you are asleep for the surgery)

Length of Stay in Hospital

Most patients prefer to stay overnight in hospital, but you can also safely go home on the same day if you are comfortable and have someone at home to look after you.

After the procedure

- It is normal to feel discomfort and perhaps some swelling in the groin, thigh, lower back and buttock.
- You may require crutches for a few days and possibly longer.

Appointment after surgery

- You will see your surgeon approximately 7-10 days following the surgery.
- All the details of the surgery will be discussed
- Your physiotherapy will be organized
- The stitches will be removed

Potential risks and complications of hip arthroscopy

All surgery has potential risks and complications and it is important you understand the risks, complications and alternative treatments before having any type of surgical procedure.

Problems following hip arthroscopy are rare. The potential risks include:

- ◇ Standard risks of undergoing General Anaesthesia
- ◇ **Infection.** This is very rare and usually easily treated with antibiotics.
- ◇ **Nerve paraesthesia or numbness.** Sometimes the traction applied on the leg during the operation can lead to pressure on the nerves in the groin, leading temporary numbness around the groin and genitalia. The numbness usually fully recovers within a few days but sometimes can take weeks.



Postoperative Care Information

Immediately after the Surgery

- ◇ **Walking:** You will be walking – possibly with the assistance of crutches. Try to walk slowly and evenly on each leg. It is important that your walking pattern is as close to normal as possible (ie. You must avoid limping)
- ◇ **Crutches:** The physiotherapist will provide you with crutches and show you how to use them properly. You can wean off the crutches as soon as desired as long as you are not limping – often after a few days
- ◇ **Pain:** You might experience some pain or tightness around the site of the incision (on the outside of the hip). Most patients feel that the pain of the surgery was much less than anticipated. Simple pain relievers such as Ice packs, Panadol and Mobic can help relieve the pain
- ◇ **Signs of Infection:** Observe the wound for any signs of infection (increasing pain, redness or swelling). If you are concerned, please call our East Melbourne rooms on, 9928 6161

1 Week

- ◇ Your physiotherapy will commence about 7-10 days after surgery
- ◇ Physiotherapy is very important to your recovery after the operation
- ◇ He / She will: develop an appropriate strength / rehabilitation program for you following the surgery guide your return to sporting activities (running etc). This is extremely variable between individuals, depending on the surgical findings and the length of symptoms prior to surgery.

After 2 weeks

- ◇ **Walking pain free:** Between 2–6 weeks you should be walking pain free
- ◇ **Cycling and Swimming:** From 2–3 weeks you may commence gentle cycling & swimming
 - ⇒ Do not attempt breaststroke. You may find flippers or pool buoy are beneficial to even out your kick with freestyle, but do not use them to kick hard
- ◇ **Running:** Usually after 4–5 weeks gentle running can be commenced
- ◇ **Competitive sport:** It may take 3 months or more to return to an elite level of competition / fitness
- ◇ **Work:** Return to work will depend on your pain and required activity
 - ⇒ Office Duties 2 weeks
 - ⇒ Manual Work 6 weeks

Activities to avoid / take care with – up to 6 weeks following surgery

- ◇ **Sitting with the hips at 90 degrees.** A more open seat angle is recommended, ie: 120° degrees. Car seats should be wound back to open the hips out.
- ◇ **Squatting / crouching.**
- ◇ **Prolonged standing.** especially on hard surfaces
- ◇ **Prolonged walking.** ie. around shopping centres
- ◇ **Heavy lifting.**
- ◇ **Sleeping on your side.** Try to sleep on your back. If you prefer to sleep on your side, sleep on the non-operative side with a pillow under your operative leg to hold that leg level with the body
- ◇ **Driving.** Clutch use in manual cars (for left hips) – may flare up symptoms in the first couple of weeks and is best avoided. Swap to an automatic transmission car if possible.

- Takla, A. (2009). *The TOD hip protocol. Sports Physiotherapy*

