

Premier  
Orthopaedic  
Pathway

## **Physiotherapy after dynamic hip screw (DHS)**

## **The surgery**

After a fractured hip a dynamic hip screw (DHS) is used to hold the bones in place while the fracture heals. It allows you to start walking straight after surgery, preventing the complications that can occur if you stay in bed for long periods.

A large screw is inserted into the head of femur (thigh bone) and is held in place by a metallic plate resting onto the side of the femur. The surgeon will ensure the screw is correctly fitted using x-ray during the operation.

It is likely that you will feel some discomfort following your operation and your pain relief will usually be either from an epidural or a pump called a PCA (patient-controlled analgesia) that delivers pain relief when needed by simply pressing a button.

## **Physiotherapy**

Physiotherapy is vital to make the most of your surgery and is essential to ensure the success of the operation.

## **Day 1**

You will see a physiotherapist on the first day after your operation, who will work through some exercises with you, and help you take a few steps to sit in the chair. You will be given a walking frame to help you balance and your physiotherapist will advise you how much weight you can put through your operated leg.

## **Walking**

Initially you will have the supervision of a nurse or Physiotherapist whilst walking. We will advise you when it is safe for you to walk on your own. You may turn around in either direction, but you must not pivot or twist on your operated leg. Step around instead.

The distance you will be able to walk varies from person to person. It is a good idea to build this distance up gradually to maintain fitness. You will not damage your hip by walking unless you take more weight through it than instructed.

## **Stairs**

If you have stairs your physiotherapist will practice them with you before you go home to ensure you are safe.

This is the order you should go up and down:

### ***Going up:***

Non-operated leg  
Operated leg  
Crutch/ stick

### ***Coming down:***

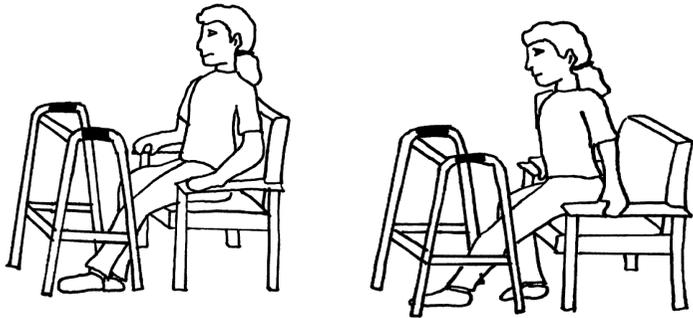
Crutch/ stick  
Operated leg  
Non-operated leg

## **Standing up**

1. Move to the front of the chair seat.
2. Push up into standing using the arms of the chair.

## Sitting down

1. Make sure you can feel the chair against the back of your legs
2. Reach back for the arms of the chair.
3. Without bending forwards gently lower yourself into the chair, taking the weight evenly through your arms.
4. You may find it more comfortable to slide your operated leg forwards as you sit down.



## Exercises

**Exercises are very important and should be started as soon as possible after surgery.**

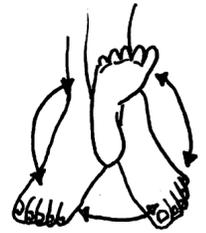
Now that you have had your hip operation it is up to you to work hard in order to return to normal activities as soon as possible.

Either the bed **or** the chair exercises should be done hourly for the first few days following your surgery.

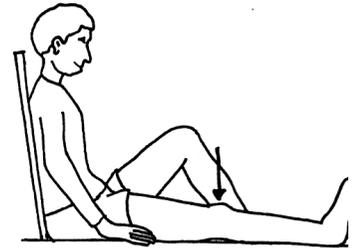
After this, exercises should be done at least five times a day unless your physiotherapist advises otherwise.

## Bed exercises

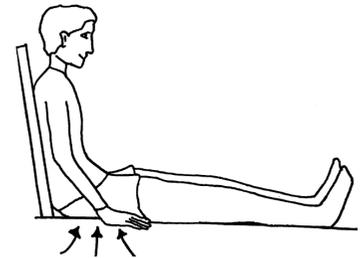
1. Foot & ankle  
Move your ankle slowly round in a large circle. Repeat this for 30 seconds every hour.



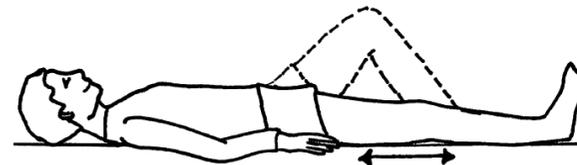
2. Thigh squeezes  
With legs out straight, push the back of your knee firmly into the bed. Hold 5 seconds then relax. Repeat 10 times.



3. Bottom squeezes  
Squeeze buttocks firmly together for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.

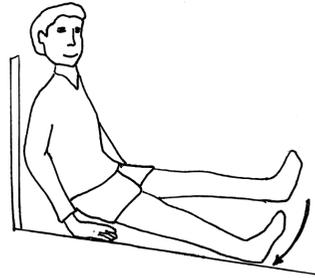


4. Knee bending  
Bend and straighten your hip and knee by sliding your foot up and down the bed. Repeat 10 times.



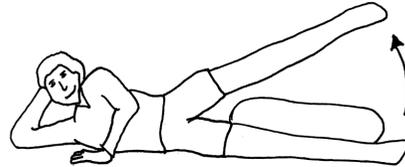
## 5. Leg sliding

Keeping your leg straight and your toes pointing towards the ceiling, slide your operated leg out to the side as far as you can manage, then slide back in. Repeat 10 times.



## 6. Leg lifting (start only when advised by your Physiotherapist)

Lying on your un-operated side with a pillow between your legs, slowly lift your operated leg up towards the ceiling, then down. Do not let your leg drop below the pillow. Repeat 10 times.



## Chair exercises

### 7. Knee straightening

Pull your toes up, tighten your thigh muscles and straighten your knee. Hold 5 seconds then slowly lower down. Repeat 10 times.



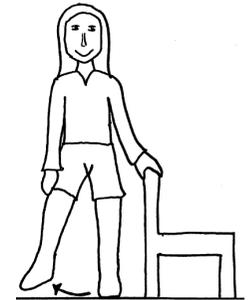
## Standing exercises

Hold onto a firm support.



8. Bring your leg back behind you, keeping your knee straight. Slowly lower down. Do not lean forwards. Repeat 10 times.

9. Slowly lift your leg sideways, then lower it back to the middle. Keep your body straight throughout the exercise. Repeat 10 times.

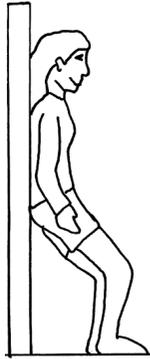


10. Slowly lift your leg in front of you as high as you can manage up to 90°, you may bend your knee. Then lower down again. Repeat 10 times.



## 11. Mini squats

Stand with your back against a wall, with your feet shoulder-width apart. Slowly slide your back down the wall allowing your knees to bend to about 40 degrees. Then straighten your knees to return to your starting position.



***It is important that you continue your exercises for at least 3 months.***

Continue to use the crutches/ walking stick until you can walk without a limp.

## Frequently asked questions

### **When will I go home?**

Everyone is different! Therefore the length of time spent in hospital will vary. If you are fit and well you may go home within a week. If you have other medical problems then your hospital stay may be longer.

### **Will I feel tired?**

You have had a major operation, so you may tire quickly, this is normal and your strength will gradually return over the next few months.

### **How long will I have pain for?**

It is likely that you will continue to experience some discomfort for several weeks. If the pain is not well controlled, please inform your GP.

### **Will I have follow-up physiotherapy?**

Your physiotherapist will arrange appropriate follow-up physiotherapy for you. This may be as an out-patient, or you may receive community physiotherapy within your own home.

The therapy team may feel that you would benefit from further in-patient rehabilitation and if you agree you will be transferred to a rehabilitation hospital. There you will continue to improve your walking and ability to carry out activities of daily living to prepare you for your safe return home.

### **When can I drive my car again?**

Check with your consultant but it is usually after 6 -12 weeks. You must inform your insurance company that you have had an operation.

### **How will I manage getting in and out of a car?**

It is easier to get into the car from a road or driveway rather than the pavement (which is higher).

1. Put the passenger seat as far back as possible with the backrest slightly tilted back.
2. Stand with your back to the car with knees touching the seat.
3. Gently lower yourself down onto the seat with your bottom as far onto the seat as possible, sliding your operated leg out in front of you.
4. Swing your legs round into the car.

Getting out of the car is the same procedure in reverse.

**Any further questions?**

Please feel free to ask your physiotherapy team if you have any further questions!

**Your physiotherapist is**

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**Contact details**

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Patient information programme 2009  
[review date: July 2012]  
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