



# Five signs you may need a hip replacement

Your hips support your body while you sit, stand and walk. So, unsurprisingly, hip problems can have a big impact on your quality of life, making everyday activities difficult or even impossible

Hip pain is caused by disease or damage to the joint and its surrounding tissues. Some hip problems resolve themselves with minimal intervention, while others require more proactive treatment.

If you've tried treatments such as medication and physiotherapy, but they've done little to help your symptoms, your doctor or orthopaedic surgeon may recommend replacing your damaged hip joint.

A hip replacement is a major operation and requires careful consideration. Your orthopaedic surgeon will carry out a thorough examination to make sure it's the best option for you.

In the right circumstances, a hip replacement can provide people with a new lease of life and dramatically turnaround symptoms.

Here are some of the common signs and symptoms that you may need a hip replacement:

## 1. YOUR SYMPTOMS SIMPLY AREN'T IMPROVING

If conservative treatments such as physiotherapy and painkillers don't improve your symptoms, you should explore other options with your doctor. They may recommend a referral to an orthopaedic surgeon for a consultation. If you're paying for your treatment or have private health insurance, you can refer yourself to your preferred surgeon directly — you don't need a letter from your doctor.

## 2. YOUR MEDICATION CAUSES SIDE EFFECTS

Some patients can't tolerate the recommended medications for their condition because of the side effects, which can be worse than their initial complaint. Sometimes, strong painkillers aren't suitable because of an existing health condition, for example stomach ulcers. If there are no alternative medications available, depending on the severity of your symptoms, you may want to consider hip surgery.

## 3. YOUR CONDITION IS IMPACTING YOUR DAILY LIFE

You might find that early treatments improve your condition to some degree, but a certain amount of pain and stiffness persists. If this continues to impact your day-to-day life — for example, you struggle to dress yourself and climb the stairs — a hip replacement may offer a more noticeable improvement. Many patients return to an active lifestyle following hip surgery, including pastimes such as swimming, cycling and golf.

## 4. YOU'RE IN SIGNIFICANT PAIN

Hip pain can be localised around your hip joint, or sometimes referred and felt elsewhere in the body, for example in your knees. Chronic pain can have a big knock-on effect on both your physical and mental health. If you're experiencing significant pain that keeps you awake at night that isn't relieved

by rest or medication, you should discuss other treatments, including joint replacement, with your doctor.

## 5. LESS INVASIVE SURGERY ISN'T AN OPTION

Your orthopaedic surgeon will only recommend a hip replacement after considering all the alternatives. Treatments such as arthroscopy (keyhole surgery) or PRP therapy are less invasive, but they're only worthwhile if they offer a good chance of improvement. Sometimes the joint has been damaged and deteriorated to such a point that a total replacement is your best option for a successful outcome.

## MEET THE EXPERT



Mr Nirav Shah is a consultant trauma and orthopaedic surgeon in Sussex. He has a particular interest in conditions affecting the hip and knee, and specialises in the use of ceramic joint replacements for long-lasting results.



Contact Mr Nirav Shah, consultant orthopaedic surgeon.  
Goring Hall Hospital, Goring-by-Sea, West Sussex BN12 5AT  
T: 01903 707373  
E: [appointments@mrniravshah.co.uk](mailto:appointments@mrniravshah.co.uk)  
[mrniravshah.co.uk](http://mrniravshah.co.uk)