

Fracture After Total Hip Replacement

A periprosthetic fracture is a broken bone occurring around the implants or components of a complete hip replacement. This serious complication often has to have surgery to correct the problem. Even though a fracture can happen during the replacement procedure, most of the time, a fracture will occur after the patient has already spent years functioning perfectly fine with their replacement. For the most part, these fractures are quite rare.

Since more patients are having to undergo hip replacement surgery, the number of fractures is expected to rise. Treating these fractures is quite challenging because patients are older and might have a number of medical problems and thinning bones.

Fracture After Total Hip Replacement Anatomy

Most of these fractures tend to occur around the stem part of the metal component that is placed into the femur. Fractures of the acetabulum (hip socket) are not as common.

Most of the time, these fractures are the direct result of a fall. They can also be attributed to a high-energy force, such as that of a direct blow to the hip side or from a motor vehicle collision. Bone quality and energy involved for the injury will end up determining the severity and type of fracture involved.

Certain factors can increase the chance of getting a fracture, such as having a condition that causes the bones to weaken. Poor vision, muscle weakness and balance also put individuals at risk for developing a fracture. Loose femoral stems are a major factor as well. It tends to occur over an extended period, but it is often attributed to everyday activities. It is also the result of a biologic thinning of the bones.

How to Treat a Fracture After Total Hip Replacement:

It is not so much about the treatment, it's more about what you can do to prevent a fracture from occurring. One of the main issues is the lack of rehabilitation following total hip replacement. Most people just do some exercises, start walking, and forget to do anything else. Working with a therapist for several weeks following a THR is extremely important for a number of reasons... 1) to regain normal function and mobility to the new hip, 2) to build up strength around the muscles. Without the strength, your leg will be weak, and balance can be poor. This is often a problem several months or years down the line when falls can occur, and this is the highest risk of a fracture. Avoiding falls will most likely avoid fractures.

However, if a Fracture Does Occur, Then These are the Options:

1. Open Reduction and Internal Fixation

If the implant is still attached firmly to the femur, it might be necessary to have internal fixation for treating the fracture. During the operation, bone fragments are repositioned to their normal alignment and held together with cables or screws attaching the metal plates to the bones' outer surface. In certain instances, bone grafts are used for healing the broken bone. Allograft bone works as a support system for weakened bones to promote healing.

2. Joint Revision

In certain instances of fractures, the implant stem loosens. In these cases, the original implant needs to be removed and replaced, which is known as a joint revision. Special components might be needed for this surgery. Implants have a longer stem on average. Allograft bone is often used to help supplement any missing or weak bones.

Tips:

- After your surgery, you are going to feel some pain. Medication prescribed by the doctor can help to alleviate some of the pain involved.
- Be careful on unfamiliar paths, slippery pavements, or obstacles that might be a hazard or cause a trip/fall.
- Managing the pain properly is an integral component of the recovery process.
- Soon after surgery is complete, physical therapy will begin.
- Once you start feeling less pain, you can start moving and regaining your strength.
- The process of regaining your strength and walking abilities might take several months.
- Maintain excellent nutrition with good quality food, organic if possible, and avoid foods with low nutrition in them (such as junk food). The minerals and nutrients in the food such as calcium and Vitamin D will help to maintain strength of the bones.
- Work closely with your www.rehabmypatient.com therapist who will guide you through the exercises. Rehabilitation will not be quick, it will take a few months to get you back to normal.