


OA Hip


Osteoarthritis, or OA, is the most common cause of physical disability in older adults. It can also be referred to as wear and tear, or called degenerative joint disease. The hip is one of the most common joints affected by the condition.

A joint is where two bones meet. These contacting areas of bone are covered with a tissue called cartilage. It's smooth design with no nerve supply, allows low friction, pain free movement of the joint,

OA occurs when this cartilage starts to break down. It can wear significantly enough to expose the roughened surfaces of bone beneath, becoming stiff and painful. Cartilage cannot be regenerated by the body, so once this wear has occurred, there is no way to reverse it.



There are various reasons why you might develop osteoarthritis. By definition, degenerative conditions get worse with time. Women are a little more likely to develop OA, as are those that have lead a particularly high impact lifestyle.



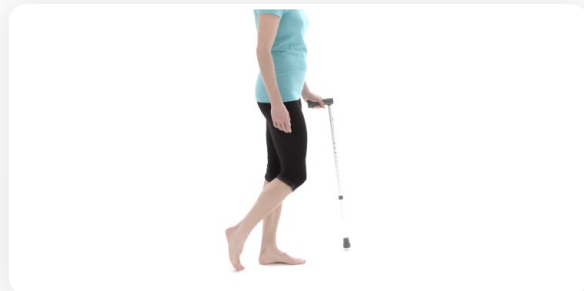
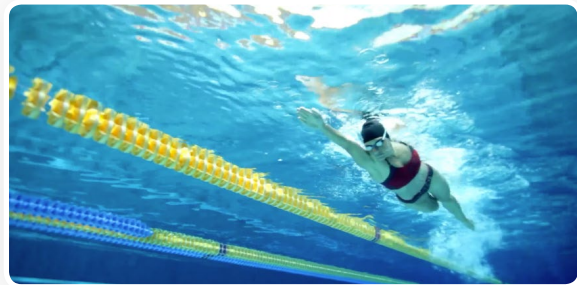
Obesity plays a large role in increasing your chances of developing OA. The greater the load on the joints, the more stresses are placed on the tissues. Previous joint injury or structural abnormalities also increase your likelihood of developing OA.

With some simple management, it is possible to significantly slow the degenerative process of your hip.

Exercise is key. The worst thing you could do by your hip is to stop using it. Focus on low impact exercises such as cycling, or swimming. Address the activities that particularly provoke your symptoms. It may be necessary to temporarily cut back.

Manage your pain with pain killers. This will enable you to perform the necessary exercises to maintain the stability and movement of the joint.

Degeneration causes stiffness, so ensure you continue to move your hip through it's entire range of movement.



The weaker the muscles, the more excess stresses and strains are placed on the cartilage. Keeping your buttock and thigh muscles flexible and strong will help you to protect your hip.

As the joint wears, your ability to balance on it is reduced. Perform drills that help you to control your hip, and reduce your risk of falling.

Finally, do not be afraid to use a walking aid. Degenerative conditions have good days and bad days. Using a walking stick or elbow crutches can help you to continue to function on these bad days, and prevent you from further provoking your pain.