

Exercises for osteoarthritis of the hip

This section contains some simple exercises that are designed to stretch, strengthen and stabilise your hips. Many of these exercises can be adapted to be done in water, which can help take the pressure off your joint.

Start by exercising gradually and build up over time. Carry on exercising even if your symptoms ease, as this can stop them coming back.

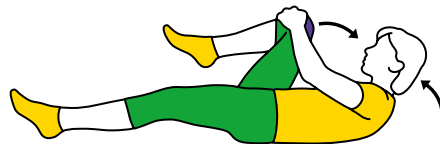
Stretching exercises should be done every day, while strengthening exercises should be done two or three times a week, and aerobic exercises two to five times a week.

If you have any questions about exercising, ask your doctor or physiotherapist before you start. It might help to go through these exercises with a physiotherapist at first, or they might be able to give you a personalised exercise plan.

If you've had a hip replacement, it's important to talk to your hospital about the exercises in this leaflet. Make sure to follow their advice before attempting to do them yourself.

Stretching exercises

Try to do these exercises every day, as stretching exercises can be particularly good for hip osteoarthritis. For these, it's good to push until you start to feel the pain, but don't push through the pain, as it could make your symptoms worse.

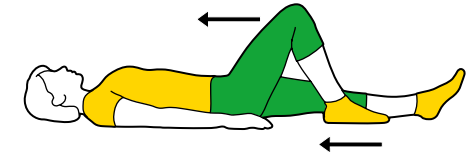


Knee lift (stretch)

Lie on your back. Pull each knee to your chest in turn, keeping the other leg straight. Take the movement up to the point you feel a stretch, hold for around 10 seconds and relax. Repeat 5 to 10 times. If this is difficult, try sliding your heel along the floor towards your bottom to begin with, and when this feels comfortable, try lifting your knee.

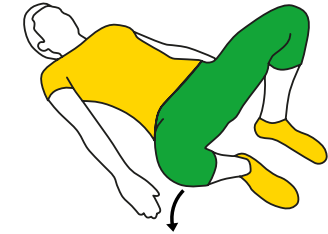
Heel slide (stretch)

Lie on your back. Bend your leg and slide your knee towards you as far as is comfortable. Slide your heel down again slowly.



External hip rotation (stretch)

Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat, hip-width apart. Let one knee drop towards the floor and then bring it back up. Keep your back flat on the floor throughout.



Strengthening exercises

To try and build up the strength of your muscles, try to do these exercises two to three times a week.

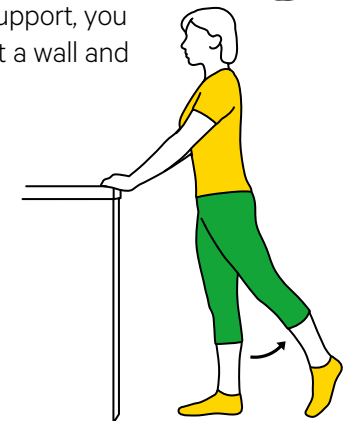
Hip flexion (strengthening)

Position yourself next to a wall that you can use for support. Stand on one leg and bring the other one up to a right angle, then hold for up to 30 seconds. If you feel safe, challenge your balance by taking your hand off the wall. Instead of using your arm for support, you can also do this exercise by leaning against a wall and sliding your leg upwards along it.



Hip extension (strengthening)

Move your leg backwards, keeping your knee straight. Clench your buttock tightly and hold for five seconds. Don't lean forwards. Hold onto a chair or work surface for support.





Hip abduction (strengthening)

Lift your leg sideways, being careful not to rotate the leg outwards. Hold for five seconds and bring it back slowly, keeping your body straight throughout. Hold onto a chair or work surface for support. You can also do this exercise lying sideways.

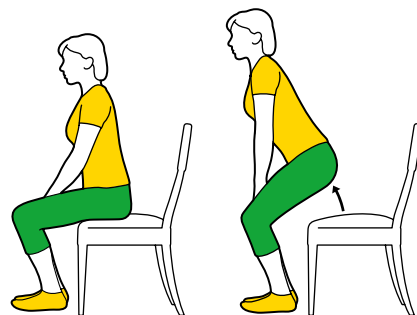


Mini squat (strengthening)

Squat down until your kneecap covers your big toe, this should be at about 45 degrees. Hold this position for a count of five, if you can. Use a work surface or a chair for support if you need to.

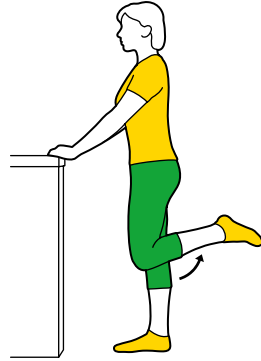
Sit/stand (strengthening)

Sit on a chair and cross your arms, so that you don't use them for support. Then repeatedly sit and stand, making sure your movements are slow and controlled. Repeat five times. You can make this exercise easier or more difficult by changing the height of the chair. You could do this by adding a cushion to the seat.



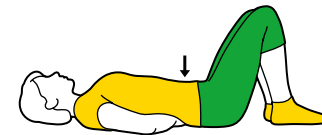
Heel to buttock exercise (strengthening)

Bend your knee to pull your heel up towards your bottom. Keep your knees in line and your kneecap pointing towards the floor.



Straight-leg raise (sitting)

Sit back in your chair, with your back straight. Straighten and raise one of your legs. Hold for a slow count to 10, then slowly lower your leg. Repeat 10 times with each leg.



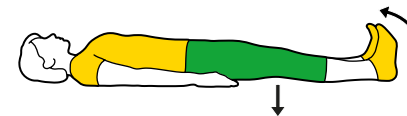
Stomach exercise (strengthening/stabilising)

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Put your hands under the small of your back and pull your belly button down towards the floor. Hold for 20 seconds.



Leg raise (strengthening)

Lie face down. Tighten your stomach and buttocks muscles to lift one leg slightly off the floor, while keeping your hips flat on the ground. Hold this position for 5 to 10 seconds and repeat 3 times.



Quadriceps exercise (strengthening)

Pull your toes and ankles towards you, while keeping your leg straight and pushing your knee firmly against the floor. You should feel the tightness in the front of your leg. Hold for five seconds and relax. This exercise can be done from a sitting position as well, if you find this more comfortable.



Short arc quadriceps exercise (strengthening)

Roll up a towel and place it under your knee. Keep the back of your thigh on the towel and straighten your knee to raise your foot off the floor. Hold for 10 seconds, then lower slowly. Your physiotherapist might suggest holding this position for longer, sometimes for up to 45 seconds.