

Minimally Invasive Technique Means Faster, Less Painful Recovery for Hip Replacement Patients

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Shopping for groceries, riding a bike, even curling up with a good book are everyday activities that are difficult, even agonizing, for millions of people suffering from osteoarthritis of the hip.

What is osteoarthritis?

Osteoarthritis, the most common form of arthritis, affects more than 30 million Americans. In the hip, it causes the cartilage normally found in the ball and socket joint to break down, removing the cushion between the bones. As the cartilage wears away, the bones eventually begin to grind against each other causing pain, loss of movement, and weakening of unused muscles.

The condition worsens over time. Initially, limiting activities, losing weight, using a cane, and taking pain medications can help you cope. But as symptoms worsen, surgical hip replacement may be the only way to restore smooth, pain-free motion and a full, active lifestyle. Nearly 300,000 hip replacement procedures are performed annually in the United States.

New treatment options

Recent developments have made it possible for hip replacement to be performed less invasively using the same high-quality, clinically proven hip implants that are used in standard surgery. The minimally invasive approach is good news for millions of Americans who suffer from arthritic hip pain, but may have put off hip replacement because of the lengthy, painful rehabilitation typically required after standard surgery.

The new technique is known as the Minimally Invasive Solutions™ (MIS™) 2-incision hip replacement. In traditional hip replacement, the surgeon makes a 10- to 12-inch incision, cutting through muscles, ligaments, and tendons in order to place the implants. With the MIS 2-Incision hip replacement the surgeon makes two incisions as small as 1 ½ to 2 inches each and, generally, separates the muscles, ligaments and tendons, rather than cutting them. Compared to standard hip replacement surgery, potential benefits for patients of the MIS 2-Incision procedure include:

- less tissue trauma
- faster and less painful rehabilitation

- smaller incisions and less scarring
- a shorter hospital stay— 1-2 days, rather than 3-5 days for standard surgery, with most patients able to go home in less than 24 hours, and
- less blood loss.

These benefits may allow a faster return to work and daily activities.

Am I a candidate?

Consult an orthopedist proficient in the MIS 2-Incision hip replacement technique to determine if you are a candidate. The doctor will evaluate a number of different factors, including the degree of hip joint damage on x-ray, your medical history, weight, current health status, and bone structure. Factors that may rule out some patients for the new procedure include extreme obesity and a previous hip replacement on the same hip.



“Dr. Hefley replaced both of my hips using the MIS 2-incision technique, with the surgeries performed three weeks apart. Ten days after the second hip replacement I was walking on my own pain-free and moved myself to a new home.” Suzanne Garrett

I have been performing the MIS 2-Incision hip replacement for the past year. Seeing happy patients return more quickly to an active lifestyle has been a gratifying experience.

Dr. Hefley is a Board Certified orthopedic surgeon performing hip and knee replacement procedures at Baptist Health Medical Center Little Rock. He is one of the first surgeons in the world to perform the MIS 2-Incision hip replacement. He lectures regularly on the technique to surgeons from around the world.