

# Hip Technology

## Offering Hope for Arthritis Sufferers

By G. Vincent Dalton, MD

An increasing number of Virginians with arthritis are living more active lives now that technology has improved hip replacement surgery.

Surgeons and manufacturers have made remarkable advances in hip replacement technology during the last few years. This procedure, though elective, is performed more than 200,000 times per year in the United States. Depending on your particular circumstances, benefits of the surgery include reduced joint pain, increased movement and mobility, correction of deformity, and increased leg strength.

People should consult an orthopaedic surgeon when pain begins to affect their overall quality of life. When keeping up

with friends, doing activities you could do a year ago, or finding simple tasks difficult, like putting on socks and shoes, it is time to consider hip replacement.

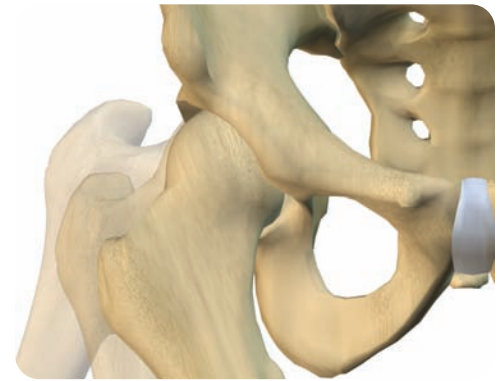
Hip replacement is composed of replacing damaged bone with a femoral stem and head (thighbone) and acetabular cup (socket). The hip joint is typically thought of as a ball and socket. Traditionally, a medical-grade plastic called polyethylene has been used as an insert between the head and socket. Today, a new metal insert is used, which gives surgeons the opportunity to choose the option they feel is best suited to their patients specific needs. Metal on metal wears less and helps enhance the system's stability.

Interest in arthritis treatment options such as hip replacement is expected to increase, especially in light of data released by the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in October 2002. The data indicates arthritis and joint problems are far more common than previously thought. The data puts the number of adults in the United States with arthritis and common joint problems at 70 million, or one in every three adults.

Hip replacement is not for everyone. As with any surgery, there are potential risks, and recovery takes time and hard work. The life of the new joint depends

on weight, activity level, age, and other factors, as each patient responds differently.

The most common adverse effects of hip arthroplasty include change in position of the components, loosening of components, fracture of components, dislocation, infection, and tissue reaction. ☹



Anterior view of a hip joint showing range of motion

For more information about hip replacement procedures, visit [www.jointreplacement.com](http://www.jointreplacement.com) or [www.allaboutarthritis.com](http://www.allaboutarthritis.com).



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Anterior view of a hip joint superimposed over a symbolic representation of a ball-and-socket joint