

Need to Know for Patients and Families

*What patients
and their
families need to
know about hip
fractures*

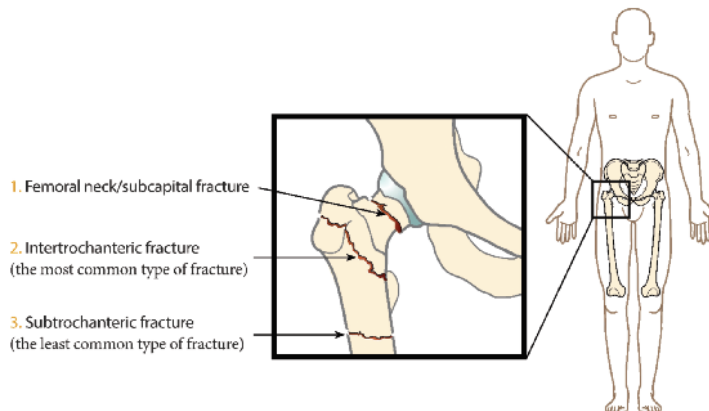
Hip Fracture & Repair

Definition

A hip fracture is a broken hip. There are multiple possible causes of hip fractures such as falls or osteoporosis (thinning bones).

What are the types of hip fractures?

Hip fractures are named for the area on the bone where it breaks. Most hip fractures occur due to either a break (1) where the ball of the 'ball and socket' hip joint breaks off the top of the femur/thigh bone (femoral neck fracture), or (2) just below the femoral neck (intertrochanteric hip fracture). (See figure). When a bone breaks, parts of the bone can remain in their normal position or the pieces can move out of line. When parts of the bone move out of line, it is called a dislocation.



Why Is It Important? Your hip joint allows you to sit, stand, walk, cross your legs, bend, and rotate at the pelvis. A hip fracture can result in difficulty moving and caring for yourself. Most hip fractures are surgically repaired; the type of surgery depends on the type of fracture.

How does the hip normally move?

The hip is a ball and socket joint where the femur meets the pelvis. The top of the femur is shaped like a ball and it sits in a cup-like area in the pelvis. The hip joint helps your bones and muscles move so that you can sit, walk, bend, and twist your body.

How will a hip fracture affect me?

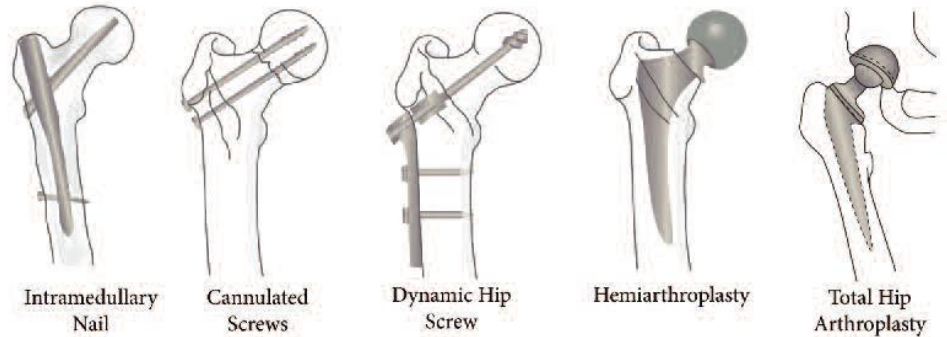
With a broken hip, you will have problems moving and caring for yourself until you heal.

Follow the advice of your care providers. You will get better most quickly if you eat well, exercise, walk and get back to your daily activity. You will continue to get better over several weeks or months. It may take up to a year to get your full strength back, so be kind to yourself. Do a little more activity each day.

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Ask your care provider to circle your surgery type on the diagram above.

What You Should Know:

The surgery will fix the broken parts of your hip. A hip fracture where the parts of the bone are not in line is very painful. Surgery will help ease the pain. In most cases, the surgery will allow you to walk safely right away. Your surgeon will let you know if there are any restrictions. Prevention of complications after hip surgery is very important.

Types of Hip Fracture Repair

There are several ways to repair a fractured hip. Your surgeon selects the best option based on where the break is, the strength of your bone and how the broken parts of the bone line up.

1. The neck of the femur is the narrow part just below the ball. For a break in this area, you may have the ball part of your femur replaced. A new ball with a stem is fixed into your femur. This is called a hemiarthroplasty.
2. If the break is below the neck on the wider part of the bone, you may have this break fixed with a metal plate, and/or nails, or a screw.
3. Some people may need the entire hip joint replaced. The ball is removed and a new ball with a stem is placed into the femur. Old bone is cleaned from the socket and a new surface is placed over the socket. This is called a total joint replacement or total hip arthroplasty.

A collaborative project of NICHE (Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders) and ICON (International Collaboration of Orthopaedic Nursing). ICON is comprised of national orthopaedic nursing associations from seven countries across four continents