

**Minimally Invasive  
(MIS)  
Hip Replacement**



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inimally invasive surgery is a new method of performing hip replacement surgery. The size of the incision(s) is much smaller than an incision used in traditional hip replacement surgery, but more importantly, there is less tissue trauma to the hip. The MIS approach allows your surgeon to avoid or lessen cutting of muscle and tendons that attach to the hip. This method helps by reducing post-operative pain, decreasing blood loss, promoting a quicker recovery and an earlier discharge from the surgical facility (usually 1-3 days). Patients are routinely able to begin walking and exercising on the day of surgery. An earlier rehabilitation following surgery promotes a quicker return to normal activities of daily living and an improved quality of life. The hip replacement components and surgical outcomes remain the same as those used in the traditional hip replacements, but the surgical procedure is different.

The development of new surgical instruments, fiber optic illumination and training has made MIS surgery possible. Special retractors allow for less cutting or separation of the muscle and tendon attachments of the hip. These retractors also protect the external rotator muscles and the sciatic nerve. Surgeons are able to visualize the “ball and socket” joint capsule and replace the hip components using a much smaller incision. Instead of a 10-14 inch incision, the procedure is performed through one (sometimes two) 3-4 inch incision(s). The size of the incision(s) varies with each patient and depends on the hip anatomy and the amount of body fat. Severe arthritic changes, deformity and body weight may require a larger incision for the hip replacement to

be done safely. The minimized trauma to the muscles and tendons during surgery translates to less discomfort and an earlier return of function than traditional hip replacement surgery.

MIS surgery does not mean risk-free surgery. The risk of infection, deep vein thrombosis (tiny clots that can form in your veins), nerve injury and implant failure remain, regardless of the technique. Antibiotics used during and after surgery minimize the risk of infection. Early mobilization (walking the day of surgery), the use of anticoagulant medications (blood thinners) and TED stockings worn during the day decrease the incidence of blood clots.

Another complication of hip replacement surgery is the risk of hip dislocation. Just like your real hip, the new hip can dislocate if the ball comes out of the socket. MIS surgery lessens the chance of dislocating the hip by less disruption of surrounding muscle and tendon attachments, improving stability and recovery. Your surgeon will give you instructions showing how to avoid activities and positions that may have a tendency to cause a hip dislocation.

It is important to remember that the length of recovery and discomfort will vary from patient to patient. Your surgeon will advise you of your limitations as you progress with recovery and therapy. Although not everyone is a good candidate for MIS hip replacement, all can benefit from the techniques used in this less invasive surgery and benefit from less post-operative pain and a quicker recovery.