

Hip Exercises

When starting new exercises, begin gradually and build up slowly over time. Stop the exercise if you feel any pain or discomfort during or afterwards.

If you have a hip replacement, seek specific exercise advice from a physiotherapist, osteopath or chiropractor.

Standing Exercises

Use something like a table or back of a chair for support and balance.

Leg Swings (flexion/extension)

1. Stand on your left leg, keeping your back upright and head facing forward
2. Gently swing your right leg forward as far as comfortable, then back as far as comfortable
3. Repeat three times
4. Repeat on the opposite leg

Leg Swings (adduction/abduction)

1. Stand on your left leg, keeping your back upright and head facing forward
2. Raise your right leg off the ground slightly and swing it across your body (to the left)
3. Gently swing it out to the right side, away from your body as far as comfortable
4. Repeat three times
5. Repeat on the opposite leg

Knee Hugs (hip flexion)

1. Stand on your left leg, holding onto something for support
2. Slowly lift your right knee up towards your chest
3. Use your hand on the back of your right thigh or front of your knee to gently hug your knee towards your chest
4. Relax the leg back down, then repeat on the opposite side

You can perform the first three exercises with a resistance band or ankle weight to improve your hip strength. Always build the weight up gradually as your strength increases and stop if it causes any pain or discomfort.

Lunge (hip extension)

1. Standing comfortably, step your right leg behind you and ensure both your feet are pointing forward
2. Gently bend your left knee, to lean into a lunge position
3. Ensure your right knee remains straight
4. Keeping your body upright, gently push your hips and pelvis forwards
5. You should feel a stretch at the front of your right hip and the back of your right calf
6. Hold for three breaths, then repeat on the opposite side

Seated

Use a comfortable, supportive seat for these exercises.

Hip Rotations (internal and external)

1. Sit comfortably on a chair, with both feet on the ground
2. Gently let your right hip relax, so your right knee rolls out to the side
3. Hold for up to three breaths
4. Gently rotate your hip in the opposite direction, so your right knee rolls inwards (you may need to move your left leg over to allow room)
5. Hold for three breaths
6. Repeat the same movements with the left leg

Knee Hugs

1. Sitting with your back supported, gently raise your right leg towards you and bend your knee
2. Use your hands wrapped around your knee or behind your thigh to hug your knee towards your chest
3. Hold for up to three breaths, then relax your leg down
4. Repeat with the left leg

Sit to Stand (Squat)

Use a chair with arms to push up on when you first do this exercise. Gradually progress to not using your arms when your strength improves.

1. Sit on a chair with your feet on the floor, about hip width apart
2. Gently putting your weight into your feet, slowly push up into a standing position
3. Try not to lean your body forwards too much
4. Slowly bend your knees while keeping your back upright, to sit back down in a controlled manner
5. Repeat three times

Lying on your Back

For these exercises, lie on your back on an exercise mat or a bed.

Knee Rolling (hip rotations)

1. Gently bend your knees and place your feet on the mat/bed
2. Keeping your knees together and feet together, gently relax your knees over to the right side to create a rotation through your hips
3. Only go as far as comfortable, you can place a cushion under your knees to support them for two breaths
4. Bring your knees back to the centre, then repeat to the left
5. Repeat three times each side

This exercise will rotate your low back, so stop if it causes any back pain and use the seated hip rotations (above)

Knee Hugs

1. Bend both your knees and place your feet on the mat/bed
2. Gently raise your right knee towards your chest
3. Use your hands on your right knee or behind your right thigh to gently hug your knee towards your chest
4. Hold for up to three breaths
5. Relax your leg back down and repeat on the opposite side

This exercise will stretch your low back, so stop if it causes any back pain and use the seated knee hugs (above)

Bridging

This is a strong strengthening exercise and will work the muscles around the hips and spine. Stop this exercise if it causes any back pain during or afterwards. It's not appropriate if you have lots of fusions in your low back or have been advised not to do similar exercises.

1. Lie on your back, bend both your knees and place your feet on the floor about hip width apart
2. Place your arms on the floor beside your body, palms facing down, to help with balance
3. Gently tense your stomach muscles to push your low back into the floor
4. Lift your pelvis off the floor until your knees, hips and shoulders form a straight line
5. Hold for two breaths, then slowly relax down to the start position
6. Repeat three times