# Exercises for hip pain

**This handy tear-off section contains exercises that are designed to stretch, strengthen and stabilise the structures that support your hip.**

## Simple stretching, strengthening and stabilising exercises

The following exercises are designed to stretch, strengthen and stabilise the structures that support your hip.

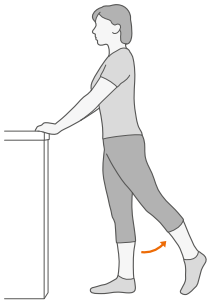
**It's important to work within your pain limits and not to overstretch yourself if you're in pain.** It's normal to feel some aching in the muscles after exercising, but you should stop and seek advice if you have joint pain that lasts more than a few days.

**If you've had a hip replacement, remember the following rules:**

- Don't bend your hips past 90 degrees.
- Don't roll your knee or toes inwards.
- Don't twist your body as you sit or stand.
- Don't cross your legs or feet.

1

**Hip flexion (strengthening):** Hold onto a work surface and march on the spot to bring your knees up towards your chest alternately. Don't go above 90 degrees.



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**Hip extension (strengthening):** Move your leg backwards, keeping your knee straight. Clench your buttock tightly and hold for five seconds. Don't lean forwards. Hold onto a chair or work surface for support.

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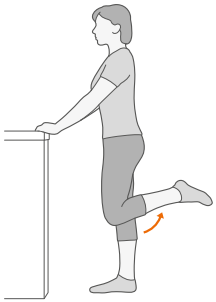
**Hip abduction (strengthening):** Lift your leg sideways, being careful not to rotate the leg outwards. Hold for five seconds and bring it back slowly, keeping your body straight throughout. Hold onto a chair or work surface for support.



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**Heel to buttock exercise (strengthening):** Bend your knee to pull your heel up towards your bottom. Keep your knees in line and your kneecap pointing towards the floor.

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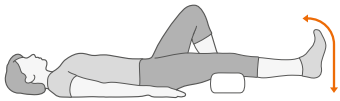
**Mini squat (strengthening):** Squat down until your knees are above your toes. Hold for a count of five if possible. Hold on to a work surface for support if you need to.



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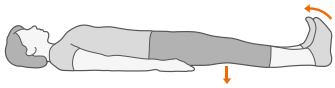
**Short arc quadriceps exercise (strengthening):** Roll up a towel and place it under your knee. Keep the back of your thigh on the towel and straighten your knee to raise your foot off the floor. Hold for five seconds and then lower slowly.



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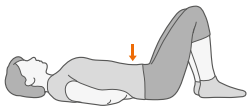
**Quadriceps exercise (strengthening):** Pull your toes and ankles towards you, while keeping your leg straight and pushing your knee firmly against the floor. You should feel the tightness in the front of your leg. Hold for five seconds and relax. This exercise can be done from a sitting position as well if this is more comfortable.



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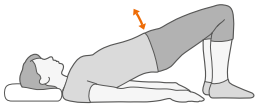
**Stomach exercise (strengthening/stabilising):** Lie on your back with your knees bent. Put your hands under the small of your back and pull your belly button down towards the floor. Hold for 20 seconds.



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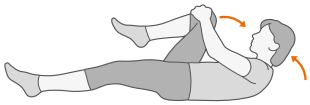
**Bridging (strengthening/stabilising):** Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Lift your pelvis and lower back off the floor. Hold the position for five seconds and then lower down slowly.



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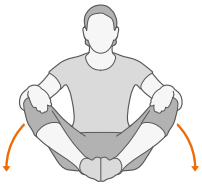
**Knee lift (stretch):** Lie on your back. Pull each knee to your chest in turn, keeping the other leg straight. Take the movement up to the point you feel a stretch, hold for approximately 10 seconds and relax. Repeat 5–10 times. If this is difficult, try sliding your heel along the floor towards your bottom to begin with, and when this feels comfortable try lifting your knee as above.



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**External hip rotation (stretch):** Sit with your knees bent and feet together. Press your knees down towards the floor using your hands as needed. Alternatively, lie on your back and part your knees, keeping your feet together. Take the movement up to the point you feel a stretch, hold for approximately 10 seconds and relax. Repeat 5–10 times.

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# Keeping active with hip pain

It's important to keep active – you should try to do the exercises that are suitable for you every day. Try to repeat each exercise between 5–10 times and perform the exercises 2–3 times each day.

Start by exercising gradually and build up over time, and remember to carry on even when your hip is better to prevent your symptoms returning. If you have any questions about exercising, ask your doctor or physiotherapist.