

Realistic Expectations

An important factor in deciding whether to have total joint replacement surgery is understanding what the procedure can and cannot do. Most patients who have a total joint replacement experience a dramatic reduction in pain and a significant improvement in the ability to perform common activities of daily living. But a total joint replacement will not allow you to do more than you could *before you developed arthritis*.

With normal use and activity, every total joint replacement implant begins to wear in its plastic spacer. Excessive activity or weight may speed up this normal wear and may cause the replacement to loosen and become painful, requiring an additional often more complex surgery. Therefore, most surgeons advise against high-impact activities such as running, jogging, jumping, basketball, racquetball, or other high-impact sports for the rest of your life after surgery.

Realistic activities following a total joint replacement include: unlimited walking, swimming, golf, driving, moderate hiking, unlimited biking, ballroom dancing, and other low-impact sports including moderate skiing and doubles tennis.