



**STURDY**  
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

## **Hip Check: How To Prolong The Life Of Your Joint Replacement**

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Hip pain that discourages or forbids everyday activities you once took part in is a sign that something needs to be done. By replacing your diseased or arthritic hip joint with an artificial one, hip replacement surgery can relieve your pain, increase motion, and help you get back to enjoying normal, everyday activities.

Today, more than 193,000 total hip replacements are performed each year in the United States, according to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. Since 1960, when the first hip replacement surgery was performed, hip replacement techniques and technology have come a long way. For one thing, the materials once used for the replacements had higher wear rates, meaning they didn't last as long as they do now. Surgeons used to wait longer to give patients hip replacements because once the joint loosened due to wear, a revision would need to be done, which is a more complicated procedure than the initial replacement with longer recovery and lower clinical outcomes.

Now, hip replacements last much longer and cause fewer complications. The old plastics that were used had a wear rate of .05 millimeters per year, compared with the newer plastics, which only have a wear rate of .005 millimeters per year. So, the newer plastics last 10 times longer, lowering the need for revisions and lengthening the life of the joint. As a result, surgeons can help people at a younger age by giving them artificial joints that now last anywhere from 15 to 25 years.

Even with the new materials used in today's joint replacements, wear does still happen. To make hip replacements last longer, patients who have artificial joints should avoid high-impact activities like daily running for exercise, and skiers should avoid trails with moguls. Daily runners should switch to lower-impact activities like swimming, biking, walking, water running, or they should use cross trainers (elliptical trainers). Making these lifestyle changes will help to lengthen the life of the artificial joint.

For more information about hip or joint replacement surgery, or to make an appointment with Dr. Magitsky, call Sturdy Orthopedic & Sports Medicine Associates (SOSMA) at 508-226-2213. Most insurance plans are accepted. SOSMA is one of 13 practices that make up Sturdy Memorial Associates (SMA), and its physicians are associated with Sturdy Memorial Hospital.