Do You Suffer From Hip Pain?
Minimally Invasive Replacement Surgery May Help

If you are suffering from chronic hip pain due to arthritis or traumatic injury and have tried other treatments such as medications and physical therapy with no improvement, you might want to investigate whether or not hip replacement surgery may be an option for you.

“Not everyone who has hip pain is a candidate for hip replacement surgery,” says Dr. Alexander Sah, an orthopedic surgeon at Washington Hospital’s Center for Joint Replacement. “If your chronic hip pain is limiting your daily activities like walking and climbing stairs or is keeping you awake at night, though, you may want to consider hip replacement surgery.”

With hip replacement surgery, the surgeon removes the damaged joint surfaces and replaces them with an artificial implant. Years ago, that surgery entailed an extensive incision that could exceed 12 inches, a lengthy hospital stay and months of rehabilitation. Today, though, the minimally invasive hip replacement surgery techniques introduced nine years ago at the Center for Joint Replacement dramatically reduce the amount of post-operative pain and significantly shorten the hospital stay and recovery period.

“In minimally invasive hip replacement surgery, we make a much smaller incision — between two and three inches,” says Dr. John Dearborn, Medical Director of the Center for Joint Replacement. “We perform the procedure using specialized instruments that allow us to prepare the bone surfaces and insert the implant without cutting across any muscles. Because trauma to the muscles is dramatically cut-tailed, patients typically are able to leave the hospital the next day.”

To help people in the community learn more about minimally invasive hip surgery, Dr. Dearborn and Dr. Sah will be conducting a free Health & Wellness seminar on Tuesday, September 14 from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Health Education, M.D. Auditorium in the Washington West Building at 2500 Mowery Avenue in Fremont. Register online at www.whhhs.com.

In addition to describing the basic surgical techniques involved in minimally invasive hip replacement surgery, Dr. Dearborn and Dr. Sah will discuss the pros and cons of various types of implants, such as metal-on-metal bearings, ceramic hip replacements and cross-linked polyethylene bearings.

“There has been a lot of development lately in new types of hip replacement surfaces, and some of the orthopedic supply companies are advertising directly to consumers, trying to make people believe that one implant is better than others,” says Dr. Sah. “All of the implants have their pros and cons. We believe, though, that the gold standard for hip replacements is a metal ball with a highly cross-linked polyethylene surface. The goal is to minimize wear, so that the patient can expect the hip replacement to last. With metal-on-metal bearings, patients can end up with cobalt ions in their bloodstream. Ceramic implants may fracture more easily.”

“Some advertisers are claiming that an anterior surgical approach to hip replacement is better than other approaches,” says Dr. Dearborn. “But that’s just marketing — it is not necessarily true in all cases. We also will discuss the pros and cons of computer-aided surgery. We want to demystify minimally invasive hip replacement surgery and give people at the seminar plenty of time to ask questions.”

Dr. Dearborn — one of the surgeons who pioneered minimally invasive hip replacement surgery — urges people who are considering the surgery to choose their surgeons carefully.

“The quality of the surgery outcome depends largely on the surgeon’s expertise and skills,” Dr. Dearborn says. “Surgeons who do only hip replacement per month may not necessarily have adequate skill with minimally invasive techniques.”

“I chose this field because I wanted to make a positive impact on people’s quality of life, and working with Dr. Dearborn has been a fantastic experience,” says Dr. Sah who joined the Center for Joint Replacement two years ago after completing a five-year orthopedic residency and a one-year fellowship in minimally invasive surgery. “As for being at Washington Hospital, it’s a ‘homecoming’ for me, since I was born here and my father was an ENT doctor here for 30 years.”

To learn more about Washington Hospital’s Center for Joint Replacement, visit www.whhs.com/joints or call (888) 494-7003.
Washington Hospital Library and Mobile Clinic Serve Tri-City Community

Health Screenings Help to Prevent Serious Illness

You probably know it's important to stay on top of your health with regular screenings that test your blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose (sugar) levels, as well as other factors that raise your risk for serious diseases. But finding the time or resources can be difficult.

Washington Hospital is working to make sure the local community has access to preventive health screenings. Bone density (osteoporosis), blood pressure and body mass index (BMI) screenings are available at the Washington Hospital Community Health Resource Library, while the Washington on Wheels (W.O.W.) Mobile Health Clinic offers a number of free and reduced-price health screenings to those who don't have medical coverage or have difficulty accessing health care.

The goal of the Community Health Resource Library is to build a healthier community by providing information and resources that promote wellness and prevention. Health screenings help to detect disease early so that treatments are more effective and to prevent serious health complications. For example, high blood pressure and excessive body weight can increase your chances for serious diseases like heart disease and stroke.

"The bone density screening identifies if you are at risk for osteoporosis," said Lucy Castillo, operations coordinator at the Community Health Resource Library. "We recommend that people come before their annual physical. That way they can take a copy of their physician and it can be included in their medical records. The Library should not be used as a replacement for a doctor's visit.

Health Information is Available

The screenings are just one way the Community Health Resource Library can help you stay healthy. The Library also offers a variety of information resources to help keep your health on track and make informed decisions about your health care. Anyone can use the Library.

"We are a lending library where you can check out books, videos and other materials and take them home," Castillo said. "You can also use our computer to access health information, including Krames Online. Krames is an up-to-date patient education library with information on more than 4,000 health topics."

Krames and a number of other health information resources are also available at the Library's website at www.healthlibrary.org. In addition, the website provides detailed information about the Library and the services it offers.

The Community Health Resource Library is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The blood pressure and BMI screenings are available any time during those hours. However, the bone-density screening is only open from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

"There are volunteers on hand who can help you with these screenings," Castillo said. "And they can help you find the resources you need."

Keeping People Healthy

Washington Hospital is also keeping the community healthy with the help of its Washington on Wheels Mobile Health Clinic, a 36-foot mobile medical unit that offers quality health care services to children, adults and seniors. A number of free and low-cost screenings are provided to those who don’t have health insurance or have difficulty accessing health care.

“Our goal is to keep people healthy and out of the hospital, and I think we are pretty effective," said Sherri Kneebone, FNP-BC, nurse practitioner for the W.O.W. Mobile Health Clinic. "If not properly treated, diabetes and other chronic diseases can cause serious illness requiring hospitalization. Health screenings like blood glucose testing can help with the detection and management of diseases like diabetes. If left untreated, diabetes can damage the kidneys, eyes and limbs. It can even lead to premature death."

The W.O.W. Mobile Health Clinic offers blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose screenings as well as BMI, prostate and thyroid screenings.

Kneebone said she is seeing a lot of people who have lost their jobs — and their health insurance — in the recession. "Many of them are in their late 50s and early 60s and struggling to find work. It’s hard," she said.

Managing diabetes and other serious illnesses can be difficult without easy access to health care. According to Kneebone, the Mobile Health Clinic sees a number of patients on a regular basis, helping them manage their chronic illnesses and keeping their risk factors in check.

“We refer a lot of people to the Community Health Resource Library so they can get more information about their illness and learn how to take better care of themselves," Kneebone said. "I also urge the ladies over age 50 to go to the Library and get a bone density test. It’s so important. Washington Hospital offers so much to the community. It’s all about keeping the community well."

To learn more about the W.O.W. Mobile Health Clinic, including locations and hours, visit www.whips.com/wow or call (510) 608-3203. To learn more about the wide variety of community services that Washington Hospital offers, visit www.whips.com/community.