

## Patient Education Material

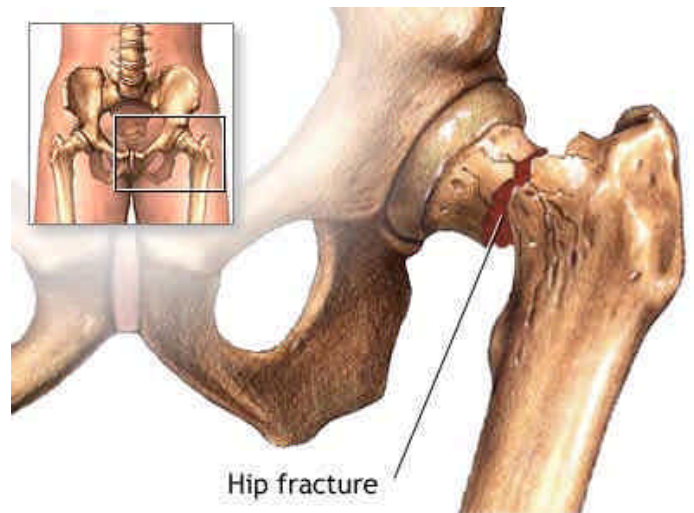
**Diagnosis:** Fractured Hip

**Definition:** A fractured hip is a broken bone in the hip area. This is a key health problem among the elderly, usually due to fall or other kind of trauma involving direct impact to the hip bone which has been weakened by osteoporosis. The part of the hip most often broken is the greater trochanter of the femur.



**Signs & Symptoms:** The signs and symptoms of a broken hip include:

- Severe pain in the hip or groin
- Swelling, tenderness, and bruising in the hip area
- Deformity of the hip
- Turning outward of the affected leg
- Shorter length of the affected leg
- Limitation of movement or inability to bear weight



## Incidence:

You can break your hip at any age, but 90 percent of hospitalizations for hip fractures are for people older than age 65. As you age, your bones become less dense as they slowly lose minerals. Gradual loss of density weakens bones and makes them more susceptible to a fracture.

More than **320,000** Americans are hospitalized for a hip fracture every year. If you're a woman, you're two to three times more likely than a man is to experience a hip fracture. That's because women lose bone density at a greater rate than men do.

A hip fracture is a serious injury, particularly if you're older, and complications can be life threatening. Fortunately, surgery to repair a hip fracture is usually very effective, although recovery often requires time and patience. Most people, even those older than age 80, make a good recovery from a hip fracture. Generally, the better your health and mobility, the better your chances for a complete recovery are.



## Treatment (Medications, therapy, surgical procedures):



Treatment will depend on the location, type, and severity of the fracture. Individuals must also be checked for other medical problems to see if they can handle the stress of surgery. Several weeks in a splint or cast may be all that is needed for mild fractures in certain locations.

Many hip fractures will need immediate surgery, known as a hip pinning. Leg traction, which is a pulling pressure applied to the leg, may be used before surgery. During surgery, the broken bone parts are put back in place. Often, they are secured with special metal pins. In some cases, part or all of the hip joint needs to be replaced in a procedure known as a hip joint replacement. This procedure is more likely if the person has severe arthritis involving the hip joint or if the bones making up the hip are broken into several pieces.

The first day after surgery you will be assisted to a reclining chair, and physical therapy may begin. You will gradually begin to take steps, walk, and learn to climb stairs with the aid of a walker or crutches.

This initial rehabilitation generally takes 4-6 days. During this time, discomfort may be experienced while walking and exercising. Pain medication will be ordered by the doctor as needed. Most patients are relieved of their painful pre-surgical hip condition.

### **Therapy and rehabilitation program**

Following surgery, you will work with a physical therapist to become independent in walking, going up and down stairs, getting in and out of bed, and doing exercises to improve the range of motion and strength of your hip. You will be instructed by your physical therapist in a specific home exercise program to meet your needs.

Do the home exercises two to three times a day (see home exercises section). Do your exercises indefinitely. Walking is not a substitute for exercise. If an exercise is causing pain that is lasting, reduce your intensity. If it continues to cause pain, contact your physical therapist or physician.

### **Do's & Don'ts (precautions, diet restrictions, risk factors/prevention):**

Following surgery, your physician may restrict how much weight you put on your fractured hip. Some examples may include:

- Non-weight bearing
- Partial weight bearing
- Touch down weight bearing

### **Support Groups:**

Further Info: (Web site addresses, phone #'s, etc.):

<http://www.vh.org/adult/patient/orthopaedics/hipreplace/>

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/invoke.cfm?id=DS00185>

<http://orthopedics.about.com/cs/hipsurgery/a/brokenhip.htm>

**For more information, please contact**

**Department Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number and Extension** \_\_\_\_\_