

Osteoarthritis, a Pain in the Hip

Is osteoarthritis ruining your life? It is mine, and I am not happy. For years it represented a minor annoyance when my right hip would click or hurt occasionally and for just a nanosecond. Recently though, the condition took a turn for the worse.

Osteoarthritis Flare-up

During Canada celebrations, I was standing around lots watching some of my grandchildren enjoy the fair-like rides. For some reason, my arthritic hip does not appreciate standing around. Within a span of an hour or so, my osteoarthritis went from a twinge once in a while to 8 out of 10 painful.

I can walk for miles, at least I could, prior to this flare-up. My hip also currently doesn't like stairs or pivoting. Or cold. It never did like cold but today the freezer section of the grocery store made it throb.

Gardening Dilemma

I had already **decided to [reduce my gardening hours](#)** but now I might have to give it up completely! I hope not, will have to wait to see if the pain continues or subsides to its previous, manageable level. It has been a full week already since the flare-up occurred. Just when I think I am feeling better, it acts up again.

I realize too, that if **[you don't use it you lose it](#)**. Perhaps my hip is bothering me more because I am not gardening (stretching, bending, squatting etc) enough. We (hubby and I) have also not been taking our evening, hour-long walks around the neighbourhood. We have been working at the cottage though,

so that should account for something, shouldn't it? Although, I am more of the gopher and consultant and he is the worker bee in those projects. So more standing around for me and less for him.

Treating the Osteoarthritis

Honestly, I have been taking it easy since the flare-up. In fact, I have read three books in the past week. I know that rest is the best way to alleviate the pain; I'm just not used to being sedentary. And, it scares me of what is to come.

Pain [medication](#) is not a great option for me as I react to most of them. I have been trying several [herbal remedies](#) instead but most of them take a while to take effect.

Anyone I know that has had hip replacement surgery for their osteoarthritis says they wished they had done it sooner. My problem is that my doctor retired recently and I have been unable to find a new one. I have x-rays from a year ago showing that my right hip shows moderate osteoarthritic changes. Also an issue is the waiting list for arthroscopic or hip replacement surgery here in Canada.

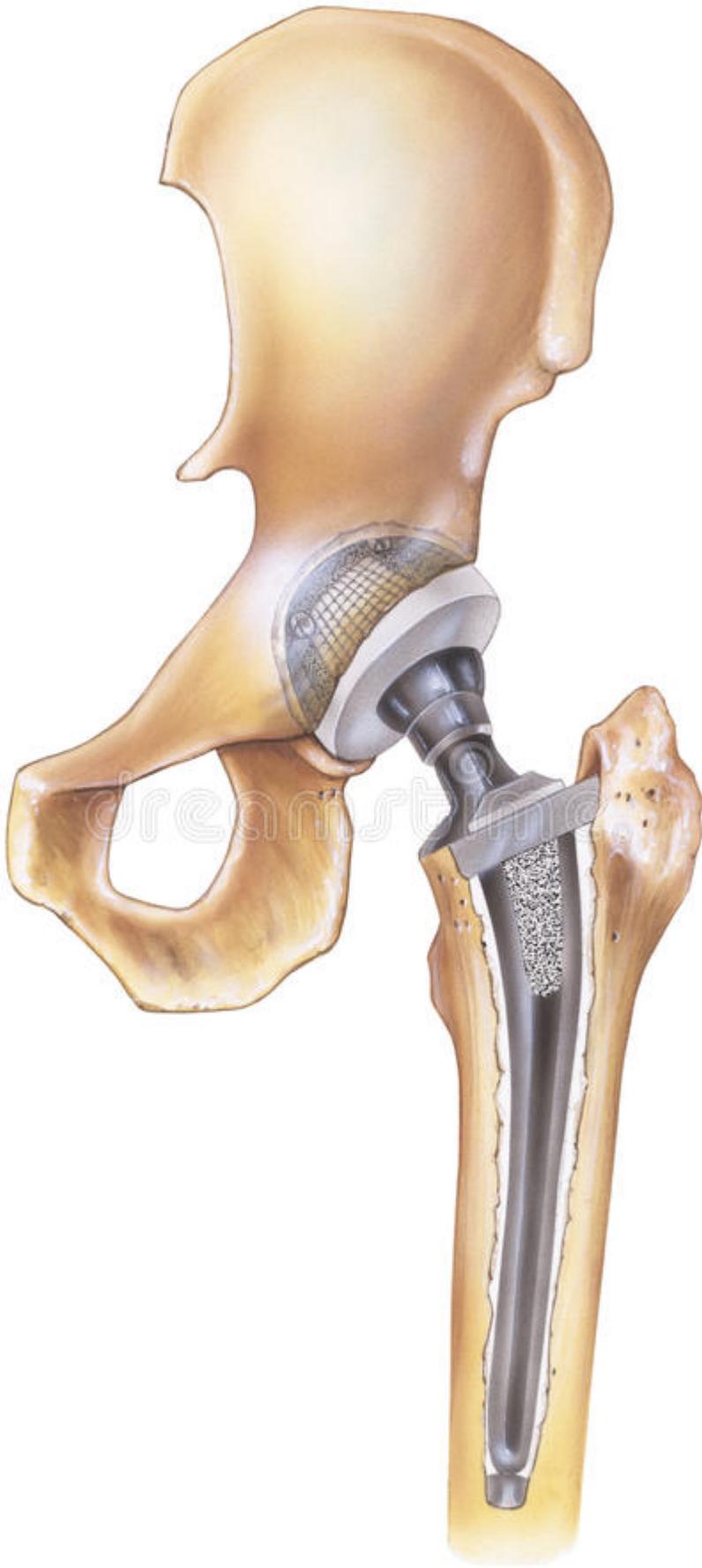
Arthroscopic Surgery

This would be the best option in my opinion but I'm not sure I am eligible. They can insert a tiny camera and instruments through a few minuscule holes to repair cartilage or bone malformations. This procedure can be performed in a few hours with much less downtime (as little as two days) than the alternative.

Unfortunately, hips already in the process of osteoarthritis (like mine) do not benefit from arthroscopic surgery.

Hip Replacement Surgery

Hip replacement is much more complicated and invasive. The femoral head (the part of the joint that is supposed to be round but gets flattened/misshapen with osteoarthritis) and damaged cartilage are removed and replaced with a prosthetic (fake) joint. [Doctor Domenic Carreira](#) says these patients require a hospital stay (a few days) and the use of a walker or cane for up to four weeks after surgery.



I think I would be a great candidate according to my age, weight, activity level, lifestyle, and medical condition:

The results of total hip replacement vary depending on the individual's age, weight, activity level, lifestyle, and medical conditions. Typically a hip replacement results in less pain and better hip function. The implants used in hip replacement do have a limited life expectancy. A joint implant's longevity will vary in every patient, but they typically last about 20 years.

Dr. Domenic Carreira

I would love to hear from anyone that has gone through either process, especially the hip replacement surgery. Also, if anyone has any tips on how to get a doctor and on the waiting list, I would appreciate the advice!

[photo credit](#)