

### Getting fit for your surgery

Before any operation you will be contacted by the pre-assessment team. They will identify any medical issues which could increase the risk of your procedure, and ensure they are as well managed as they can be.

During and after your surgery your team will make every effort to ensure the risks of your operation are as low as possible. There are some things you can do to help make your surgery successful too:

### Obesity

In the UK around 1 in 4 adults are living with obesity. We use your weight and height to calculate your Body Mass Index (BMI).

World Health Organisation BMI Classification:

Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5 - 24.9	Normal weight
25 - 29.9	Overweight
30 - 34.9	Class I obesity
35 - 39.9	Class II obesity
40 and above	Class III obesity

Although weighing more than your body is designed to carry may have little effect on your day to day life while you are well, it frequently worsens the symptoms of hip and knee arthritis.

Hip and knee joint surfaces experience forces more than 7 times our body weight, so achieving a weight appropriate for your height is recommended as part of the initial management of joint pain from arthritis. Some patients find that their pain becomes manageable and they can avoid surgery once their weight has reduced.

If surgery is recommended then reducing your weight to achieve a BMI of 35 or less can significantly reduce the risks of surgery. In some circumstances surgery can be performed at a BMI of over 35, this is carefully assessed individually.

Weight loss is largely achieved by eating a healthy, calorie-restricted diet and is helped by taking exercise. Trying to lose weight through exercise alone requires a very high level of activity. With a painful hip or knee this is almost impossible, hence the importance of dietary changes.

Adult men need to eat 2500 kcal per day to maintain weight. To lose weight this number needs to reduce to 1900 kcal per day.

Adult women need to eat 2000 kcal per day to maintain weight. To lose weight this number needs to reduce to 1400 kcal per day.

There are a number of free calorie-counting apps available to help you document what you are eating each day. The NHS Better Health website is also a useful resource:

<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/lose-weight/>

You may also wish to speak to your GP about additional support or weight loss strategies that may be available to you.

### Exercise

Taking regular exercise improves your heart and lung (cardiorespiratory) health, can help reduce the risk of complications during surgery, and speed up your recovery after your operation.

As part of the initial management of hip or knee arthritis, exercise can help to control your symptoms and in some cases avoid an operation. Many people have already been referred for this before they speak to a surgeon but if you have not then it is worth considering.

Walking, cycling, swimming, and other low-impact exercise can be particularly helpful for hip and knee arthritis pain. Further advice can be found here:

<https://roh.nhs.uk/services-information/therapy/exercises-for-osteoarthritis-of-the-hip>

<https://roh.nhs.uk/services-information/therapy/exercises-for-osteoarthritis-of-the-knee>

### Smoking

Smoking is known to increase the risk of infection and blood clot after surgery. As a smoker your lungs are more sensitive and less able to clear secretions which makes you at higher risk of chest infection. Your body becomes accustomed to breaking down the chemicals in the smoke, which means it also breaks down some of the medicines used during your anaesthetic more quickly.

You will be asked to stop smoking before your surgery to reduce your risk of complication. It is best if you can stop at least four weeks before your surgery.

### Diabetes

Good diabetic control is important to reduce the risk of complication in surgery. A blood test (HbA1c) is used to assess your long term blood sugar control, if it is higher than recommended you will be asked to liaise with your diabetes team for advice in improving blood sugar control.

If you have further questions please do contact us via Carebit or [sally@medicalsecretaries.co.uk](mailto:sally@medicalsecretaries.co.uk)