

Physiotherapy Newsletter

June – Senior’s Month and Hip Fractures



As we age it often becomes more difficult to participate in activities that are meaningful to us. When we do too much, pain and fatigue can set in, causing us to have a bad day. It is often difficult to complete activities on bad days, and therefore we might feel like we have to catch up on a good day by taking on a lot more. This becomes a negative cycle, as overdoing it leads to an increase in bad days and can prevent us from doing those activities we need to get done as well as those activities that we enjoy.

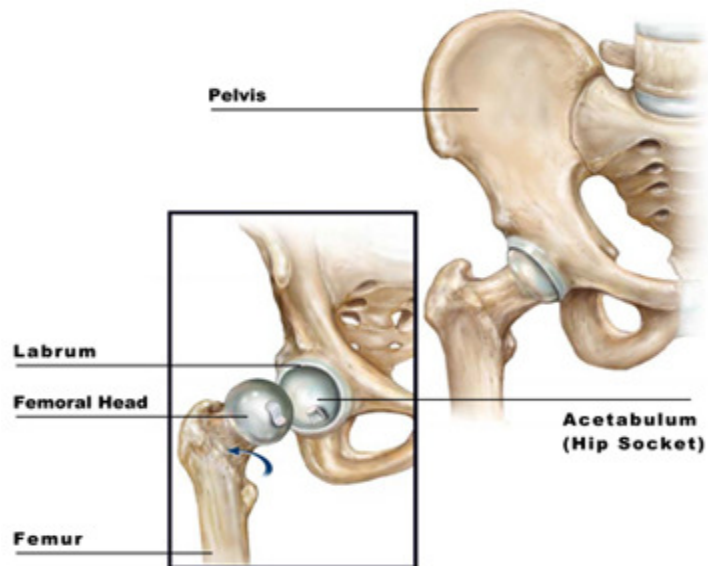
Pacing is a simple technique used to increase the amount of activity we are able to do while reducing the frequency of relapses caused by overdoing it. Pacing helps in conserving energy that can later be used to achieve more.

Pacing: Consider how much time you are able to participate in an activity before becoming fatigued or experiencing pain. This is the recommended amount of time you should spend doing an activity. Don't push yourself to finish something when pain or fatigue increases. Spread the tasks you need to get done throughout the day or the week. Once you reach your limit, switch activities or take a break and rest. Finish the activity later in the day, or on another day. You should break down larger activities into smaller, more manageable components. When preparing a meal, for example, consider preparing some of the items earlier in the day so it doesn't all have to be done at once. By not overdoing it you have a better chance of being able to get more done the next day, allowing active participation in more activities. To learn more about pacing and maximizing your ability to participate in activities that are important to you, talk to an Occupational Therapist at Limestone Health Consultants today!

Hip Fractures: Research gathered by the Canadian Institute for Health Information indicates one in three people 65 years and older fall each year; half of these people fall more than once per year. Fractures of the hip carry significant risks for seniors. Studies show that people 65 years of age or older whom sustain a hip fracture die within 12 months of sustaining the fracture. Many of those whom recover from a fracture are unable to return home due to loss of mobility and strength or are unable to care for themselves. For more information please refer to the Canadian Institute for Health Information by clicking on their website: www.cihi.ca

Anatomy of the Hip

The joint capsule of the hip is comprised of the femoral head and the acetabulum of the pelvis. The labrum is a ring of fibrous cartilage that maintains joint fluid by providing a suction seal to the femoral head. The hip joint is stabilized by strong ligaments, flexor and extensor muscles that extend downward from the acetabulum and attach to the femur.



Main causes of hip fractures:

- 1) Trauma – Falls, MVA's
- 2) Osteoporosis* – A common bone disease of the bone in people 65 years or older.

*Please see the November 2009 Newsletter for further information on preventing Osteoporosis.

Tips to prevent hip fractures:

- ✓ Be proactive and request a bone density test
- ✓ Exercise daily to strengthen muscles, improve balance and keep joints lubricated
- ✓ Eat a well balanced diet
- ✓ Take supplements to strengthen bones
- ✓ Utilize canes and walkers when walking to improve balance
- ✓ Use a non-slip mat in the bath tub to prevent slippery surfaces
- ✓ Use night-lights at night to create a clear, visible pathway in the case of having to use the bathroom or walking at night
- ✓ Remove tripping hazards from around home (cords, scatter rugs, etc)
- ✓ Install grab bars in bathrooms and railings in stair wells
- ✓ Have medication reviewed by Family Physician or Pharmacist to prevent side effects of weakness or dizziness