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Gluteus Medius Repair

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Answers to common questions about gluteus medius tears, hip bursitis, and surgery to repair the tendon or remove the bursa.

UNDERSTANDING THE CONDITION

1 What is the gluteus medius?

The gluteus medius and minimus are muscles on the outside of the hip that keep your pelvis level when you walk — sometimes called the **"rotator cuff of the hip."** Their tendons attach to a bump on the outside of the hip bone (the greater trochanter).

2 What are bursitis and tendon tears?

A **bursa** is a fluid-filled sac that cushions the tendons. Pain on the outside of the hip is often caused by irritation of the tendons and bursa together. Over time, the tendons can wear and **tear**, causing pain lying on that side, pain with stairs, and a **limp**.

3 Can it be treated without surgery?

Usually, at first. Physical therapy to strengthen the hip muscles, avoiding lying on that side and crossing the legs, weight management, and sometimes injections are tried first. Surgery is considered when a tear is seen on MRI and pain or limping continues despite **3–6 months** of treatment.

YOUR SURGERY

4 Bursectomy or tendon repair — what is the difference?

A **bursectomy** removes the inflamed bursa, often with a release of the tight band over it. A **tendon repair** reattaches the torn tendon to the bone with anchors. Many patients have both. Depending on the tear, this is done through small incisions with a camera or through a small open incision.

5 What are the risks?

Uncommon risks include infection, blood clots, wound problems, continued pain, and the repair not healing.

6 How should I prepare?

- Practice walking on crutches with light weight on the leg, including stairs.
- Set up a firm, high chair and consider a raised toilet seat.
- Arrange help at home for the first 1–2 weeks.

RECOVERY

7 How do the recoveries compare?

	Bursectomy alone	Tendon repair
Crutches	A few days to 2 weeks, as needed	About 6 weeks, with light (foot-flat) weight on the leg
Brace	None	Sometimes, to limit hip motion
Sports and exercise	About 6–12 weeks	About 4–6 months

8 What should I avoid after a repair?

For about 6 weeks: do not cross your legs, lift the leg out to the side, or lie on the operated side. Sleep on your back or the other side with a pillow between your knees.

9 When can I drive and return to work?

Not while taking narcotics. **Left hip** with an automatic car: often 1–2 weeks. **Right hip:** once off crutches — usually within 2 weeks after a bursectomy, about 6 weeks after a repair. **Desk work:** often 1–2 weeks.

10 How long until I feel normal?

Pain usually improves first. Strength and the limp improve more slowly — full recovery after a tendon repair often takes **6–12 months**.

Still have questions? Call our office at **469.800.7200**. After surgery, follow your post-operative instruction sheet — if anything here differs from it, the instruction sheet takes priority.