

Hip Resurfacing

Resurfacing on the orthopedic landscape is a type of **total hip arthroplasty (THR)** once thought to be dead and buried under the smothering weight of stacks of articles chronicling the complication riddled outcomes from this procedure. This type of **THR** is known as **Hip Resurfacing**. With the advent of hard bearing surfaces in the realm of traditional **THR**, there has been a resurgent interest in backtracking to see if these surfaces might overcome the shortcomings of the original **hip resurfacings** and offer some hope for this procedure once again.

With **hip resurfacing**, acetabular preparation is the same as in traditional **THR**, but femoral preparation is accomplished with less sacrifice of femoral bone stock. There is also the maintenance of a more normal (larger) femoral head size compared to traditional **THR** with a hope of greater hip joint stability.

Unfortunately the original experience with **hip resurfacing** revealed the procedure to have an unacceptably high rate of failure due to wear and loosening of the thin polyethylene acetabular components. In addition there was a substantial failure rate of the femoral components due to avascular necrosis of the femoral head underlying the component, and femoral neck fracture.

It appears at present that the newly designed metal acetabular components for **hip resurfacing** will decrease the rate of acetabular failure due to wear compared to earlier polyethylene designs. A decreased rate of acetabular loosening may also ensue as a byproduct of this construct. Femoral component survivorship stands to be less favorably enhanced with little change in the newer components, and with avascular necrosis of the femoral head and femoral neck fractures still looming large.

Large femoral heads and “hard bearing” technology currently make traditional **total hip arthroplasty** the gold standard for all hip arthroplasty in general. Whether **hip resurfacing** will be able to claim a viable place in this realm is yet to be determined. In the meantime one must swim hard against the tide of marketing and await data from ongoing investigations.