

## **Return to Pickleball and other Racket Sports after Total Joint Arthroplasty**

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### **INTRODUCTION:**

Participation in pickleball and other racket sports is growing, particularly among older adults who may also be candidates for total joint arthroplasty (TJA). Currently, there is limited data on performance, safety, and return to racket sports after TJA.

### **METHODS:**

An online survey was sent to 7200 patients who had undergone at least 1 primary TJA at a single academic center over the past 10 years (5 surgeons). The survey asked patients about their prior and current racket sports participation including ability level, expectations, limitations, and reoperations. Demographics, patient-reported outcomes, and reoperations were also captured through chart review. Chi-squared, analysis of variance, and t-tests were used to compare demographics and outcomes.

**RESULTS:** Of the 1,284 respondents, the average follow-up was 3.6 years (range 0.5-10). In total, 61.7% had never played a racket sport, 25.3% had not played a racket sports in the 2 years prior to surgery (remote), and 13.0% had played a racket sport in the 2 years prior to surgery (recent). Of the recent players, 71.9% returned to play after surgery, compared to 30.2% of remote players. The majority of players returned to play at a similar skill level, duration, and frequency with the majority returning to play by 6 months postoperatively. Higher physical function outcomes were reported by recent players that returned to play after TJA. Rates of reoperation were not significantly different between patients who did and did not return to play.

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:** The majority of recent racket sports players were able to return to play after TJA at their same skill level by 6 months postoperatively with higher physical function outcome scores and without an increase in reoperation rate. Future studies are needed to determine long-term consequences of racket sports participation after TJA.