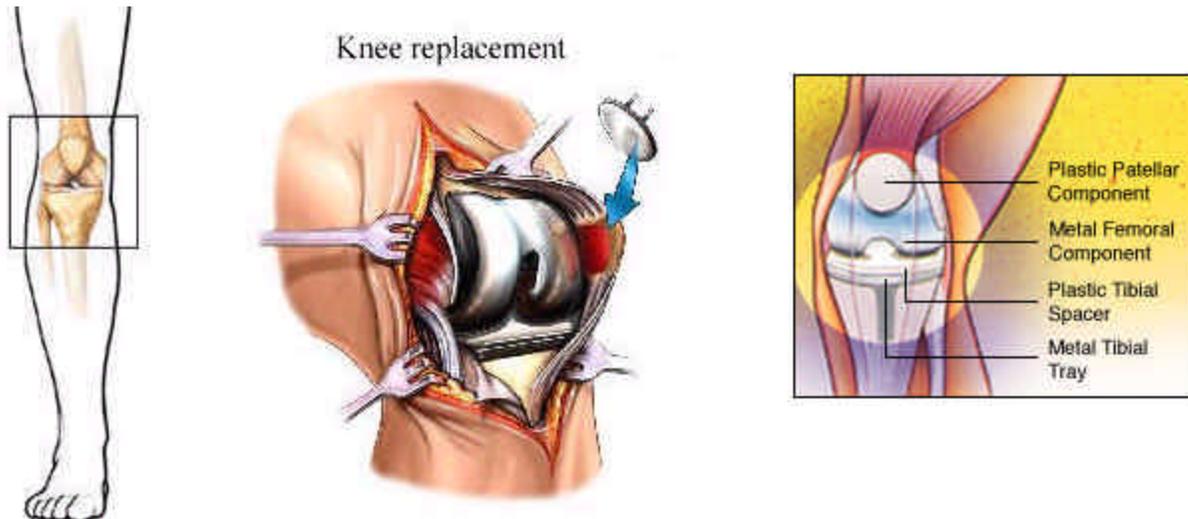


Patient Education Material

Diagnosis: Total Knee Replacement

Definition:

Total knee replacement (TKR), also referred to as total knee arthroplasty (TKA), is a surgical procedure where worn, diseased, or damaged surfaces of a knee joint are removed and replaced with artificial surfaces. Materials used for resurfacing of the joint are not only strong and durable but also optimal for joint function as they produce as little friction as possible.



Signs & Symptoms:

Pain is the most noticeable symptom of knee arthritis. In most patients, the pain gradually gets worse over time, but sometimes has more sudden “flares” where the symptoms get acutely severe. The pain is almost always worsened by weight bearing and activity. In some patients, the pain becomes severe enough to limit even routine daily activities.

Morning stiffness is present in certain types of arthritis; patients with this symptom may notice some improvement in knee flexibility over the course of the day. Rheumatoid arthritis patients may experience more frequent morning stiffness than patients with osteoarthritis.

Patients with arthritis sometimes will notice swelling and warmth. If the swelling and warmth are excessive, and are associated with severe pain, inability to bend the knee and difficulty with weight bearing, those signs might represent an infection. Such severe symptoms require immediate medical attention.

Incidence: Total joint replacement of the knee has become an extremely successful and relatively



common way to relieve pains and restore motion to this joint. As a result of these successes, approximately 200,000 knees are replaced annually in the United States. Because of their physical improvement after surgery, people who have a total joint replacement often expect to be able to participate in any and all types of activity. However, by engaging in certain strenuous activities, a patient can potentially destroy the artificial joint. Although people who have a total joint replacement should limit their participation in some sports after surgery, they can participate in a wide variety of activities that will not damage their new joint. After a total knee replacement, you may be able to move more easily. Most people gain all of the benefits listed below.

- Reduced joint pain. Even the pain from surgery should go away within weeks.
- Increased leg strength. Without knee pain, you'll be able to use your legs more. This will build up your muscles.
- Improved quality of life by allowing you to do daily tasks and low-impact activities in greater comfort.
- Years of easier movement. Most total knee replacements last for many years.

Treatment (Medications, therapy, surgical procedures):

After surgery, make sure you also do the following:

- Participate in regular light exercise programs to maintain proper strength and mobility of your new knee.
- Take special precautions to avoid falls and injuries. Individuals who have undergone total knee replacement surgery and suffer a fracture may require more surgery.
- Notify your dentist that you had a knee replacement. You should be given antibiotics before all dental surgery for the rest of your life.
- See your orthopedic surgeon periodically for a routine follow-up examination and X-rays, usually once a year

Do's & Don'ts (precautions, diet restrictions, risk factors/prevention):

You can keep your knee healthy by knowing the right moves and avoiding the wrong ones. Some activities could harm your artificial knee and may be permanently restricted.

Do's

- Position your knee comfortably as you go about daily activities.
- Continue to exercise and walk every day.
- Use an ice pack if your knee begins to swell or feel tender.

Don'ts

- Avoid twisting your knee. Turn your entire body instead.
- Avoid jumping. It could loosen your new knee joint.
- Avoid forced movements, such as bending your knee too far.

Further Info: (Web site addresses, phone #'s, etc.):

http://hcd2.bupa.co.uk/fact_sheets/html/knee_replacement.html

The Arthritis Research Campaign

0870 850 5000

<http://www.arc.org.uk>

Arthritis Care

020 7380 6500

<http://www.vh.org/adult/patient/orthopaedics/kneereplacement/>

http://www.medicinenet.com/Total_Knee_Replacement/article.htm

<http://www.arthroscopy.com/sp05038.htm>



For more information, please contact

Department Name _____

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