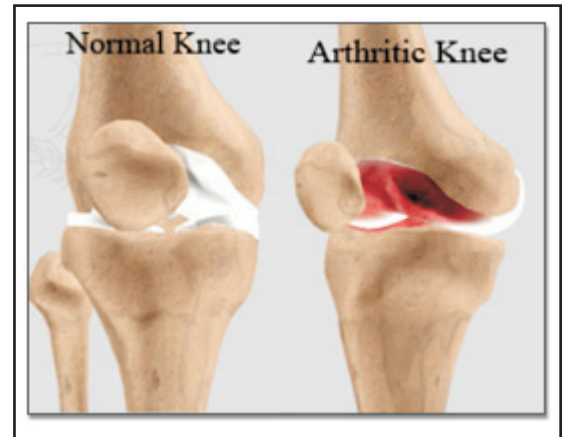


Most people are aware of the total knee replacement surgery. This involves replacing the unhealthy surface of the entire knee joint with metal and plastic implants. It is a very successful operation with good long term results. However a large percentage of patients have arthritis limited to one part of the joint alone. Replacing the whole joint in these patients is overkill and unnecessary.

Many middle aged men and women develop osteoarthritis of the knee. Osteoarthritis of the knee affects the inner half or medial compartment to start with and then proceeds to affect the outer half or lateral compartment.



In this operation only that part of the knee, which is unhealthy, is replaced. The normal surfaces are left alone. This operation has several advantages over total knee replacement surgery.

- It can be done through a very small incision.
- It is minimally invasive and hence tissue damage is far less.
- The patient gets complete pain relief and the implant lasts long
- The knee feels more natural as ligaments are preserved
- Range of movement is full and it allows squatting and sitting crosslegged
- Post operative hospitalization is reduced and return to normal is much faster than total knee replacement surgery.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is unicondylar arthroplasty, or partial knee replacement?**
- **What are the advantages unicondylar arthroplasty?**
- **How is it different from total knee replacement?**
- **You mentioned recovery is faster. What does that mean?**
- **What does the surgeon do during a unicondylar arthroplasty?**
- **How do I know if I am a candidate for this surgery?**

What is unicondylar arthroplasty, or partial knee replacement?

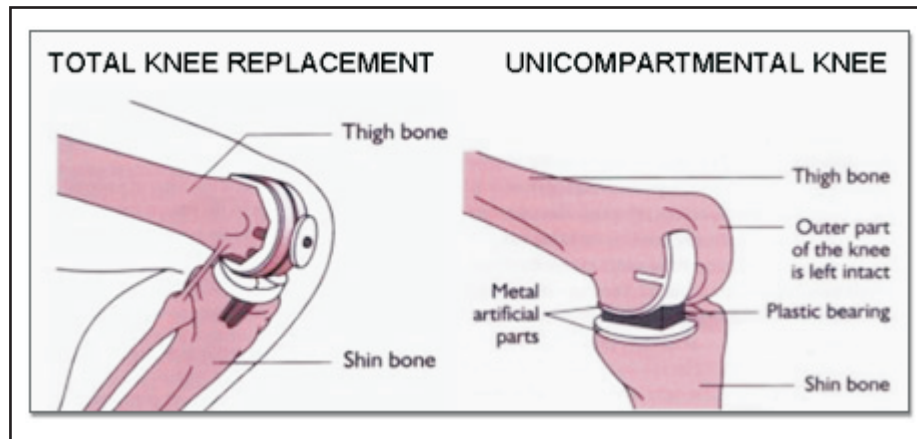
Partial knee replaces only the area of the knee that is worn out, sparing patients the more medically complicated and involved total knee replacement surgery.

What are the advantages unicondylar arthroplasty?

With a partial knee replacement, there is a dramatically shorter recovery time due to less surgical trauma, less scarring and fuller range of motion.

How is it different from total knee replacement?

During total knee replacement, surgeons typically make a 7 to 8-inch incision over the knee, patients stay in the hospital for approximately four days, and there is a recovery period of up to three months. During minimally-invasive partial knee surgery, a part of the knee to be replaced through a small, 3-inch incision. There is minimal damage to the muscles and tendons around the knee and the required hospital stay is up to two days. The recovery period is about one month.



You mentioned recovery is faster. What does that mean?

Patients often walk unassisted within a week or two of the operation. Even those who have both knees done at once are able to walk without the assistance of a walker or cane fairly quickly.

What does the surgeon do during a unicompartmental arthroplasty?

When a knee replacement is performed, some bone and cartilage are removed using precise instruments to create exact surfaces to accommodate a metal and plastic prostheses.

How do I know if I am a candidate for this surgery?

Candidates for this surgery are generally younger, more active patients. The partial knee replacement allows for symptoms of pain or discomfort. The procedure allows younger patients to buy time before they need a full knee replacement. The procedure is also effective for older patients if they have disease localized to one half of the joint.