

# Good News for Bad Knees

**Minimally invasive surgical technique provides a partial knee replacement option for conditions like osteoarthritis.**



Your knees are subject to a lifetime of repetitive bending, lifting and pushing that can leave them worn out. The stress of these motions causes the knee cartilage - the smooth cushioning tissue that serves as a shock absorber between your bones - to wear thin and become rough and bumpy. The severe form of this condition is known as osteoarthritis. When the cartilage in your knees deteriorates you lose this lubricant that allows the surface of the bones to glide. As a result, the joint space between the bones in your knees narrows leaving you with bone rubbing on bone.

Osteoarthritis, a type of arthritis, affects 23 million and according to the CDC will rise to 60 million by 2020. In comparison, arthritis affects 40 million Americans each year.

## Benefits of Minimally Invasive Partial Knee Replacement

- Less invasive surgery
- Less scarring
- Shorter hospital stay and recovery time
- Conserves healthy portions of the knee and ACL
- More natural feeling knee
- Greater flexibility

Many people begin to feel the effects of thinning cartilage when they are in their 40s - stiff knees that ache when you walk, bend, sit or stand; swelling and feeling warm to the

touch. Over time, osteoarthritis in the knee can lead to decreased activity and an impaired lifestyle because of the resulting pain.

## Assessing Your Condition

Understanding your treatment options and disease stage begins with an examination by an orthopedic specialist to evaluate decreased function, tenderness and any swelling or deformities.

While there are three compartments to the knee, only one joint space is typically affected. A basic x-ray and the exam will allow the specialist to determine which knee compartments are affected and design a custom treatment plan.

Sometimes the wear and tear of OA may not respond to conservative treatments to decrease swelling and pain. About 20 percent of individuals affected require surgery.

## Advanced Surgical Technique Provides a Partial Knee Replacement Option

The Orthopedic Surgeons at Holy Family Hospital's Regional Center for Orthopedic Care are now using a minimally invasive surgical technique to perform partial knee replacements that conserve two-thirds of the



Orthopedic Surgeon, Tom Hoerner, evaluates a patient to assess the range of function in their knee and identify any tenderness, swelling or deformities

knee when compared to a total knee replacement. If the patient is an appropriate candidate, this can mean a more natural feeling knee and shorter recovery for patients because the surgery is less invasive.

“This bone- and tissue-preserving procedure provides an alternative solution for knee pain when the disease is present in one compartment,” explained Thomas Hoerner, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon at Essex Orthopaedics. “For the right candidate, this coordinated approach allows us to keep the healthy portions of a patient’s knee and ACL and relieve them of their pain before the disease progresses to the whole knee.”

This approach can result in a knee that feels more natural explained Barry Bickley, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon at Associates in Orthopedics. “When preserving more of the bone and maintaining the ACL, patients can experience a more natural feeling knee with greater flexibility and natural stability. The minimally invasive procedure is less painful and allows for a shorter recovery time.”

“This technique is a great solution for patients with isolated disease in their knee,” said Steven Andriola, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon at Orthopaedics Northeast. “Patients sometimes believe they need to wait until they

are older or until the pain progresses to have surgery, but using this new approach enables them to get back to the activities that they may be giving up.”

Traditionally after a knee replacement patients have a three-day hospital stay and sometimes inpatient rehabilitation. Now patients can go home the same day as the procedure and recover at home where specialized nurses and physical therapists provide the same care that would take place in the hospital explained Eric Arvidson, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon at Essex Orthopaedics. “We’re proud to bring this advanced surgical technique to the Merrimack Valley and are committed to providing innovative options for treatment and recovery so that individuals can focus on enjoying their life.”

## MEET THE EXPERT NOVEMBER 19

**GOOD NEWS FOR BAD KNEES**  
with Orthopedic Surgeon Thomas Hoerner, MD.  
*Details on the back page.*

Consult with an orthopedic surgeon,  
call Steward DoctorFinder at 800-488-5959  
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