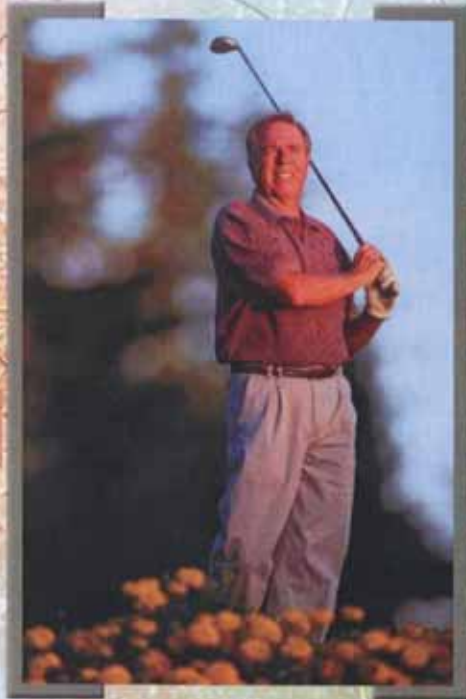


Partial Knee Resurfacing



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at Battle Creek Health System

What is partial knee resurfacing?

Partial knee resurfacing (PKR) is a minimally invasive procedure for relieving arthritic knee pain and disability. With PKR, the damaged surface of the knee joint is resurfaced with metal and plastic implants.

The three compartments of the knee

The knee joint is made up of the lower end of the thigh bone (femur), the upper end of the shin bone (tibia) and the knee cap (patella). Cartilage covers the bone ends to help cushion the joint and protect it from wear. The knee is often described as having three "compartments" or surfaces. The femur ends with two "knuckles" or condyles, and where they contact the shin bone forms two of the compartments. The third compartment is formed where the underside of the patella interacts with the femur.

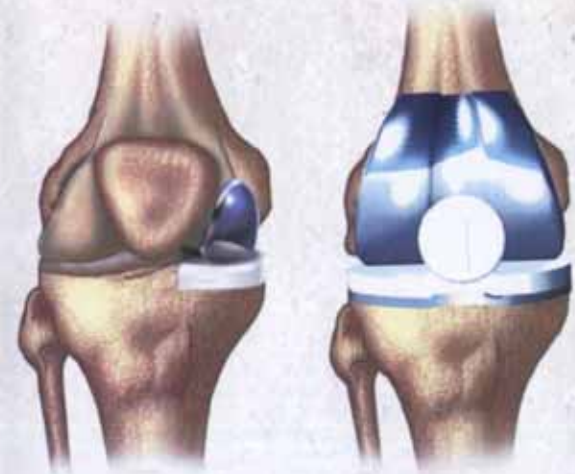
One of the most common causes of knee pain is osteoarthritis—the wearing away of the protective cartilage. Arthritis can attack any of the three compartments, but most often it is the one on the inside of the knee. If the arthritis is confined to one compartment, partial knee resurfacing may be considered.



How is partial knee resurfacing done?

With PKR, only the damaged surface of the knee joint is replaced, minimizing trauma to healthy bone and tissue. In addition, because the PKR implants are much smaller than total knee replacement implants, the surgical incision can be significantly smaller as well. The surgeon removes the damaged bone from the affected side of the femur and tibia, and then fits the implants to the bone surfaces. A metal component is attached to the femur, and a plastic one is applied to the tibia. Instead of bone rubbing on bone, metal now rubs on plastic.

COMPARISON BETWEEN PARTIAL KNEE RESURFACING (PKR) AND TOTAL KNEE REPLACEMENT (TKR)



With PKR, the worn compartment is now resurfaced with metal and plastic.

With TKR, the entire surface of the femur is filled with a metal component, while the tibia is resurfaced with metal or plastic.

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Who should have partial knee resurfacing?

As mentioned, one of the most common causes of knee pain is osteoarthritis—also known as “wear and tear” arthritis. Conservative treatments such as medications and physical therapy may effectively relieve pain and restore mobility. When these treatments no longer work and severe pain and disability appears, partial knee resurfacing may be the next step. For those who have arthritis on only one side of their knee, partial knee resurfacing offers a promising alternative to total knee replacement.

Is there an alternative to partial knee resurfacing?

Partial knee resurfacing may be recommended after a thorough diagnosis of your joint problem. Alternative treatment options including medications, injections, physical therapy or other types of surgery may also be discussed with you.

What about pain?

Thanks to advances in medication technology, we are able to keep you relatively comfortable after surgery.

How long is recovery after partial knee resurfacing?

Because most of the knee joint is unaffected and the basic knee structure remains intact, post-operative pain may be reduced and recovery time faster when compared with total knee replacement. Most patients leave the hospital after one or two days and may not even require physical therapy. A few gentle exercises and walking may be the only rehabilitation needed.

Are there complications?

As with any surgery there is a risk of complications, though with PKR the risk is generally quite low. Blood clots are the most common complication after surgery. Your orthopedic surgeon may prescribe one or more measures such as blood thinners and special support hose to help prevent clots from forming in your leg. You may also receive antibiotics to help prevent infection. Other complications include implant loosening, fractures, and nerve or blood vessel damage. Your surgeon will be taking great care to reduce the risk of these and other complications.

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How can I learn more?

You can reserve a space at one of our upcoming knee and hip pain seminars. Call today for more information.

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