

Welcome to the: Orthopaedic Opinion Online Website

The website for the answer to all your Orthopaedic Questions

- **Orthopaedic Opinion Online** is a website designed to provide information to patients who have orthopaedic and musculoskeletal problems and are undergoing treatment.
- **Patient information** is provided in the form of downloadable information sheets.
- **Orthopaedic advice** and second opinions can be provided by our expert internationally renowned Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeons.
- **Online review** of patients' X rays or MRI scans can also be provided and any proposed treatment plans reviewed.
- **Book a clinical consultation** with one of our internationally renowned consultant orthopaedic surgeons in Bristol or London.
- **Orthopaedic reports** can be provided for Injury or Accident Claims and Medical Negligence claims.

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Osteoarthritis of the Knee

Link - <http://www.arc.org.uk/arthinfo/patpubs/6027/6027.asp>

Osteoarthritis of the knee

Key words: Osteoarthritis, arthritis, hip joint, knee joint, joint inflammation, knee replacement, knee arthroscopy, knee osteotomy

This booklet aims to help people who have osteoarthritis of the knee, and their families and friends. We first explain how osteoarthritis of the knee develops, how you can recognize the symptoms, and how doctors diagnose and treat it. We then offer hints and advice on living with it more easily, including answers to common questions.

What is osteoarthritis?

Osteoarthritis is a disease which affects the joints in the body. The surface of the joint is damaged and the surrounding bone grows thicker. 'Osteo' means bone and 'arthritis' means joint damage and swelling (inflammation). When joints are swollen and damaged they can be painful. They can also be difficult to move. Osteoarthritis of the knee is a very common form of osteoarthritis. Other joints which are often affected include joints in the hands, the spine, the hip joint and the big toe.

How does osteoarthritis of the knee develop?

To understand how osteoarthritis develops you need to know how a normal joint works. A joint is where two bones meet. Most of our joints are designed to allow the bones to move in certain directions. The knee is the largest joint in the body, and also one of the most complicated because it has many important jobs to do. It must be strong enough to take our weight and must lock into position so we can stand upright. But it has to act as a hinge, too, so we can walk. It must also withstand extreme stresses, twists and turns, such as when we run or play sports.

The knee joint is where the thigh bone (femur) and shin bone (tibia) meet. The end of each bone is covered with cartilage which has a very smooth, slippery surface. The cartilage allows the ends of the bones to move against each other almost without friction. The knee joint has two extra pieces of cartilage (called meniscal cartilages or menisci) which help to distribute the load evenly within the knee.

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