

Orthopaedic Connection

Total Knee Replacement

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The article that I referred to last week about partial and minimally invasive knee replacement has opened a door that we haven't been through yet. So this is as good a time as any to continue your education about the knee joint. Usually I wouldn't start out talking about total knee replacement in the treatment of knee joint arthritis. There are always other things on the menu, which I know about and certainly offer the patient.

At this time though, because I was talking about knee surgery last week let us cover total knee replacement at this time.

What a huge decision to make for the patient and family. If conservative nonsurgical treatment has not worked and symptoms are severe enough, the person really has no other choice. Did you know we do seven times as many knee replacements as hip replacements? There also are many more total knee replacements done on women than men.

That's a whole article in itself and I don't want to get sidetracked.

I have the knowledge and diagnostic means to know when there is nothing left for the patient but a total knee.

There is incidentally, much information about this subject on the office teaching website www.orthopodsurgeon.com.

Relieving the symptoms of knee arthritis of course is the primary goal of total knee replacement. What then is the second most important consideration in choosing a total knee prosthesis? Any ideas? The answer is that it should last as long as you do and not wear out. Sounds like a tall order since we are doing these total knees on relatively younger patients all the time.

The total knee prosthesis I have used for several years is the DePuy Inc. LCS total knee prosthesis. It has lasted for twenty years (and counting) in 95% of patients that have had it, i.e. the LCS prosthesis.

How can this be? "I thought they only lasted 10 years" is something patients still say to me. I tell them to learn about the LCS total knee and they will change their mind.

The reason for this is that the LCS prosthesis reduces wear on the parts to a minimum. It is the only knee that works like your own knee. Not only does it bend and straighten, but it rotates or pivots in the knee like your natural knee does. No other total knee works in this unique way to mimic human knee motion. If wear on the parts is reduced to a minimum, particularly the plastic polyethylene, the parts have every chance of lasting as long as you need them.

There is a lot more we need to cover and will in future articles about knee arthritis.

For accurate and useful information about all of your Orthopaedic questions log onto our office teaching website, www.orthopodsurgeon.com / Your Orthopaedic Connection.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush