

# Young People With Arthritis Of The Knee



In young people, osteoarthritis of the knees is usually caused by inadequate treatment of an injury. Once established, arthritis cannot be 'cured'. Knee surgeon Dr Terence Chan discusses prevention and treatment.

Injuries are the main cause of osteoarthritis among younger patients. Injuries to the anterior cruciate ligament or meniscus, if not properly treated, can cause arthritis, especially if one remains very active and 'plays through' any symptoms.

"A 25-year-old footballer has osteoarthritis because an injury five years ago was not properly treated. There is very little I can do for him now - his knee is too far gone," says Dr Chan.

## First line treatment

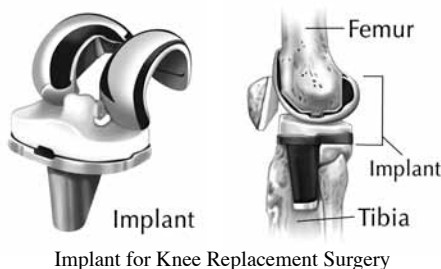
Wearing soft sole shoes and weight loss makes a huge difference. Avoiding impact helps, but if that means giving up activity altogether and becoming unhealthy as a result, it is better to have sore knees than diabetes and a heart attack or a stroke. The food supplement glucosamine has been proven to help arthritis. Injections of 'viscosupplements' that lubricate the joint can be helpful.

## Biological Knee Replacement

In some young people with significant knee damage, Dr Chan performs what he calls a 'biological knee replacement' by reconstructing any torn ligaments, repairing or replacing damaged meniscal cartilages and sometimes cutting and realigning the bones. "It is a big undertaking. It is much easier to treat the injuries early, before secondary damage has occurred," he says.

## Unicompartmental Knee Replacement for younger patients

If a younger patient needs a knee replacement, the Unicompartmental Knee Replacement is often a good option. Only the



most damaged part of the knee is replaced. Most patients can walk with a stick in just a few days, and return to normal activities within a few weeks.

## Total Knee Replacement

For patients with advanced arthritis, Total Knee Replacement may be the only option. "The surgery will eliminate the pain by replacing the worn out knee with a new artificial joint and allows the patient to return to fairly normal life. However, the implants eventually wear out, so it is better to save one's own knee than have an artificial one," said Dr Chan.



Unicompartmental Knee Replacement often makes the knee feel 'normal'.

## Hi-tech Operating Theatres

Matilda International Hospital is a pioneer in surgical advances and clinical gold standards. To match the quantum leaps in medical technology, the operating theatres have been upgraded with state-of-the-art precision systems, featuring fully integrated operating systems and high definition cameras.

The surgical service is supported by an experienced clinical team, a well-equipped surgical ward, and a day case unit designed for clients who want a more private recovery environment for same-day discharge procedures.



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