



MINIMALLY INVASIVE TOTAL KNEE REPLACEMENT ALLOWS

Faster Recovery *with* Less Pain



By Dr. Jeffrey D. Yergler, MD

Total knee replacement surgery involves removing cartilage that has been damaged from arthritis, injury, or other cause, and resurfacing the bones with metal and plastic implants. This relieves pain and restores function. In fact, joint replacement surgery is one of the most successful procedures in the history of medicine. Total knee replacement allows patients to return to the activities that they have given up due to arthritic pain.

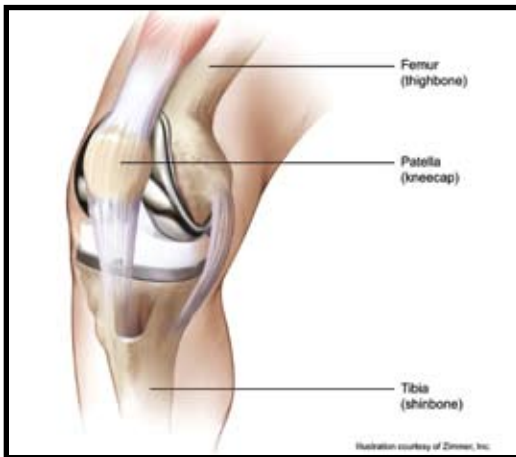


As Orthopaedists gained more experience with knee replacement surgery, they found that patients were really happy with their procedures after about six months. Until that time, patients were bothered by aches

and pains, as well as stiffness. Therefore, new techniques and instrumentation were developed to allow for less tissue damage, less pain, and a more rapid recovery.

Minimally invasive knee replacement involves using a skin incision that measures as small as 2 _ inches, compared to the standard 8 to 12 inch incision. More importantly, however, is what is done underneath the skin. With a traditional knee replacement, the muscles and tendons are cut and the knee and knee cap are dislocated during the procedure. With minimally invasive surgery, the muscles and tendons are left intact, and the knee and knee cap are not dislocated. This results in less tissue damage, less blood loss, less pain, and more muscle strength. Patients are able to walk immediately after their surgery and can go home either the same day or the following morning. They can drive a car after a few days, and patients often return to work in as little as two weeks.

Total Knee Replacement - Implants In Place



When minimally invasive techniques were first developed, the procedures were limited to a certain group of patients (usually thin patients with less arthritis). However, with advanced instruments and techniques, almost all patients are now candidates, even patients with larger legs and significant deformities.

The implants used in minimally invasive procedures are the same as traditional knee replacements. Patients can expect excellent longevity and performance of their implants.

South Bend Orthopaedic surgeons now perform knee replacements through smaller incisions than in previous years, utilizing experience, special training and instrumentation. SBO recognizes size of the incision is less important than what is done underneath the skin (leaving the muscles and tendons intact and not dislocating the knee). If performed by an experienced South Bend Orthopaedic surgeon, minimally invasive surgery is safe and effective, and most importantly, patients love the results.

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