

Knee Replacement

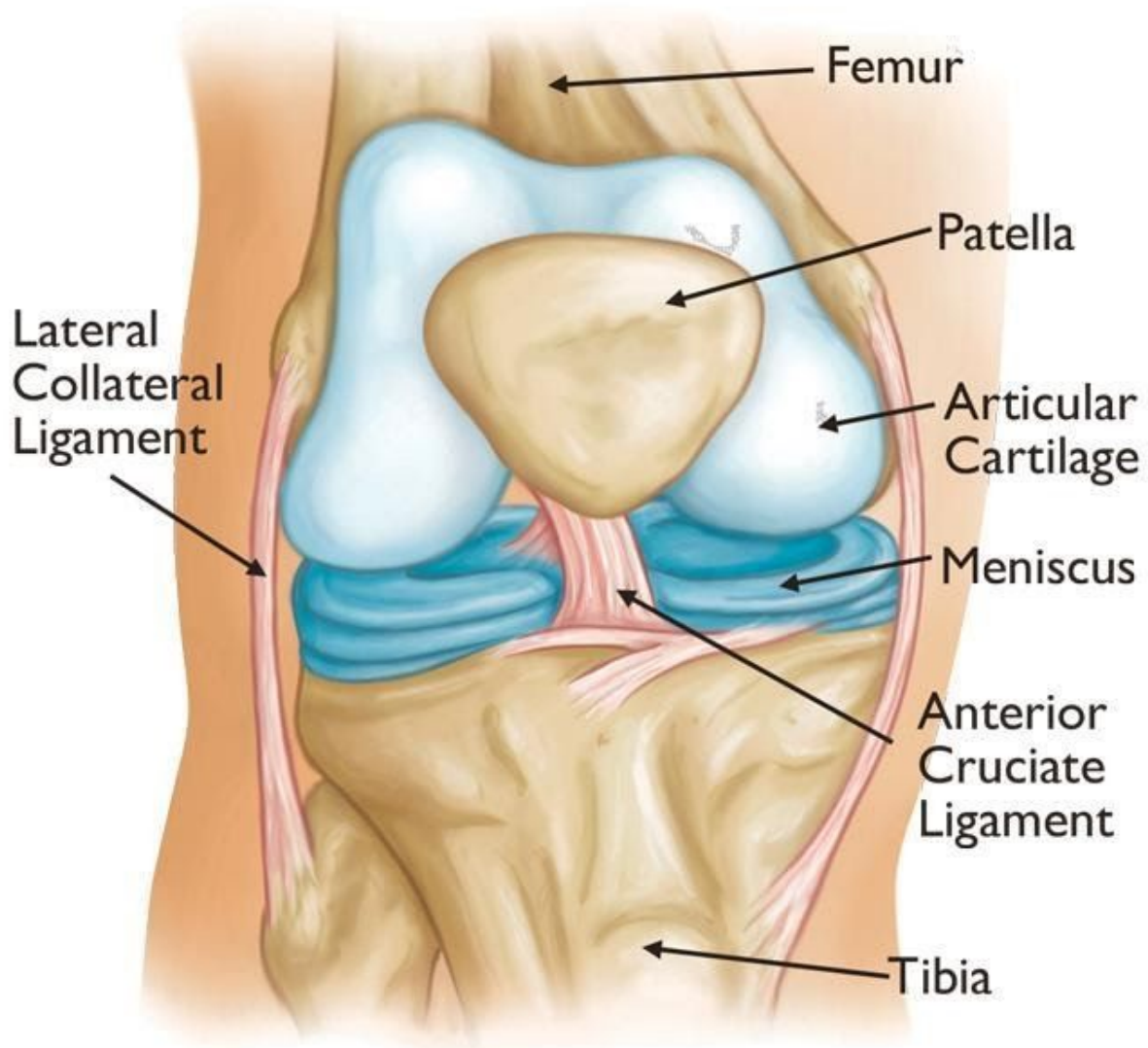
Knee replacement surgery — also known as knee arthroplasty (ARTH-row-plas-tee) — can help relieve pain and restore function in severely diseased knee joints. The procedure involves cutting away damaged bone and cartilage from your thighbone, shinbone and kneecap and replacing it with an artificial joint (prosthesis) made

of metal alloys, high-grade plastics and polymers.

In determining whether a knee replacement is right for you, an orthopedic surgeon assesses your knee's range of motion, stability and strength. X-rays help determine the extent of damage.

Your doctor can choose from a variety of knee replacement prostheses and surgical techniques, considering your

age, weight, activity level, knee size and shape, and overall health.



Why it's done

The most common reason for knee replacement surgery is to relieve severe pain caused by osteoarthritis. People who need knee replacement surgery usually have problems walking, climbing stairs, and getting in and out of chairs. Some also have knee pain at rest.

For most people, knee replacement provides pain

relief, improved mobility and a better quality of life. And most knee replacements can be expected to last more than 15 years.

Three to six weeks after surgery, you generally can resume most daily activities, such as shopping and light housekeeping. Driving is also possible at around three weeks if you can bend your knee far enough to sit in a car, if you have enough muscle control to

operate the brakes and accelerator, and if you're not still taking narcotic pain medications.

After recovery, you can engage in various low-impact activities, such as walking, swimming, golfing or biking. But you should avoid higher impact activities — such as jogging, skiing, tennis and sports that involve contact or jumping.

Talk to your doctor about your limitations.

