

# **Argus Orthopaedic Zone**

## **Treatment of Common Knee Problems**

By Thomas J. Haverbush, M.D.

Orthopaedic Surgeon

Last week I told you what knee problems we usually see in the office. There are a number of pretty common ones. You learned a little about each, but no treatment was described. That was by design, because this week I can tell you how the different conditions are treated. Here goes.

### **Knee cap (patellar) pain**

Doctors call it anterior knee pain or chondromalacia. It is very common in a lot of different age groups. The under surface of the knee cap is supposed to be smooth and slippery, not rough and scratchy. In many cases it can be treated without surgery by a definite prescribed exercise program that you need to be taught to do. I also have a favorite joint supplement (Osteo-Bi-Flex) that I recommend for some people with the condition. As you can imagine the same treatment doesn't work on everybody, because each problem is individual to that patient.

Arthroscopic surgery is sometimes necessary, but other things come first. You will probably need an examination to figure out if this is what you actually have.

### **Torn Cartilage**

This also is a very common problem I see in the office. It is found in all ages and in males and females alike. Torn cartilage does not heal. Patients can often get by with it if it is not causing the knee to lock up or give out. Eventually arthroscopic surgery is required to treat torn cartilage. Most of the time I will order an MRI to be sure that it is torn cartilage we are dealing with. Once the diagnosis is made it is up to the patient to decide if he or she is having enough trouble to have surgery at that time.

### **Arthritis**

This of course is a very large subject that we can't completely cover here. There are a whole bunch of things for treatment other than total knee replacement, so relax! If I am taking care of you, there is always a menu of treatment. I pointed that out to you a few weeks ago. I will cover knee arthritis in depth very soon. Please watch for it.

### **Infection**

It is a very serious problem that needs to be treated aggressively with IV antibiotics and often arthroscopic surgery to wash out the knee. Pain, redness, swelling and fever in some combination occur. If you even think you may have an infection please be seen at once.

### **Gout**

It is extremely important that gout be diagnosed instead of infection as the cause of the knee pain. The two can be confused. Gout treatment is medical, not surgery.

### **Knee Bursitis**

This is treated by removing the fluid, injecting medication and wrapping the knee. Surgery is only rarely needed and only if the bursa is painful or large.

### **Baker's Cyst**

Fluid can be removed from the cyst and medication injected. If it won't go away it may need arthroscopic surgery to treat the inside of the knee that is causing the fluid to form.

Next week I will cover some of the important knee injuries we see and treat. After that I will spend some time helping you understand knee arthritis and its treatment. Stay with me, OK.

For much more information about knees log onto [www.orthopodsurgeon.com](http://www.orthopodsurgeon.com) my office teaching website for patients and families. It can also take you into Your Orthopaedic Connection.

Our goal is simple - To help people return to more pain free, functional lives.

Good health. Good life. All the best to you.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush