

Are Knee Replacements the Answer?

Q. Is total knee replacement the best treatment for me right now? What other treatments should I think about?

A. The top complaint that precedes the request for total knee replacement is pain. I recommend conservative nonoperative care first. Take over the counter anti-inflammatory medication (ibuprofen or naproxen) and ice your knee. Soft knee sleeves also may ease pain and modifying movements can help. Follow this regimen for about three to four weeks.

If the pain persists, schedule an appointment with your family physician.



JOSEPH SCARCELLA, MD

They may start you on a course of prescription anti-inflammatory medication along with physical therapy. If you are significantly overweight, your family physician should discuss weight loss programs to decrease the weight on your knees.

If this does not help, your physician will refer you to an orthopaedic surgeon who will offer two different types of injection treatment. Cortisone shots can relieve pain and last any-

where from four weeks to six months. No more than two to three injections per year are recommended.

The second injection is a form of hyaluronic acid, called viscosupplementation. This injection can last up to six months and be repeated indefinitely.

If knee pain continues to interfere with everyday function, you may consider total knee replacement. Based on the amount of wear on your joint, there are different replacement options available. For many individuals, replacement surgery can drastically improve their quality of life.

For an appointment with

Dr. Scarcella or any of our Cleveland Clinic orthopaedic surgeons at Medina Hospital, call 866.275.7496. For more information, visit clevelandclinic.org/ortho.

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