



Meniscal Transplant

Overview

This outpatient procedure is performed to replace lost or severely damaged meniscal cartilage in the knee joint. In a healthy knee, this cartilage is present in two c-shaped wedges called menisci. Each one is called a meniscus. These wedges help cushion and stabilize the knee. This procedure is performed under general anesthesia with the aid of a small camera, called an arthroscope, and miniature instruments.

Preparation

In preparation for the procedure, the surgeon readies a graft made from tissue taken from a donor knee. The patient is positioned, and the knee is cleansed and sanitized. The surgeon creates a series of small openings in the joint for the arthroscope and instruments.

Preparing the Joint Surfaces

The surgeon uses the instruments to carefully remove any damaged meniscal cartilage from within the joint. The surfaces of the joint are shaped to fit the graft.

Implanting the Graft

The surgeon creates a small incision in the knee. The graft is inserted and sutured securely into place. In some cases, an additional incision is needed during the suturing process. The surgeon may also use screws or other devices to help anchor the graft.

End of Procedure and Aftercare

When the procedure is complete, the instruments are removed and the incisions are closed. The knee is bandaged. The patient will wear a knee brace and will use crutches. As the knee heals, the patient will begin a physical therapy program. Most patients will be able to resume normal activities within six months to one year.

