

Arthroscopy



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In the past, treatment of orthopedic injuries involved extensive surgery, including large incisions, a hospital stay, and a prolonged recovery period



But **arthroscopy** has revolutionized the treatment of joint injuries! With the help of an arthroscope, today's orthopedic surgeon can easily **examine, diagnose, and treat** problems in the joint that previously may have been difficult to identify

The arthroscope is a small fiber optic viewing instrument made up of a tiny lens, light source and video camera



The surgical instruments used in arthroscopic surgery are very small (only 3 or 4 mm in diameter), but appear much larger when viewed through an arthroscope. This is a probe used for examination of internal structures

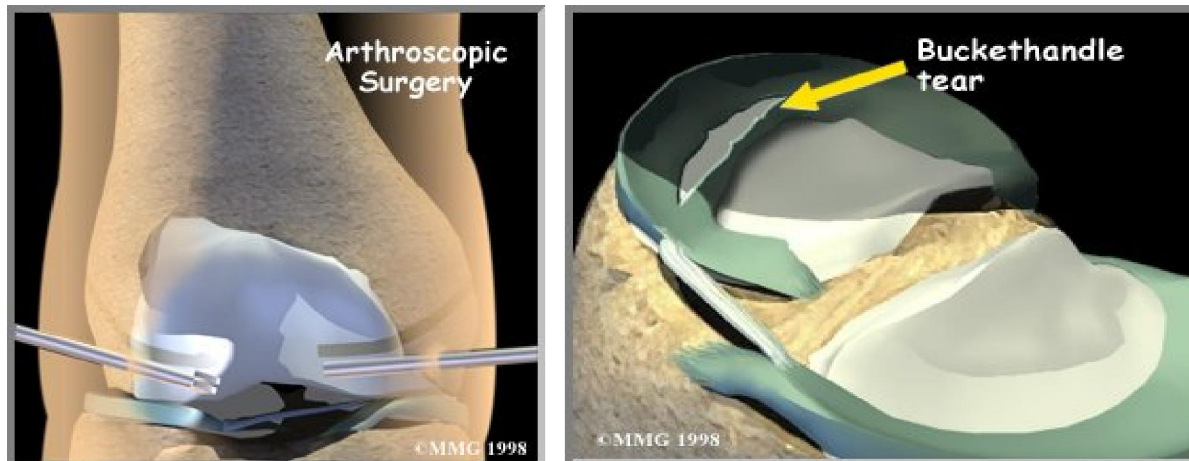
The surgeon inserts the arthroscope into the joint through a tiny incision (about 1 centimetre) called a **portal**. Other portals are used for the insertion of surgical instruments.



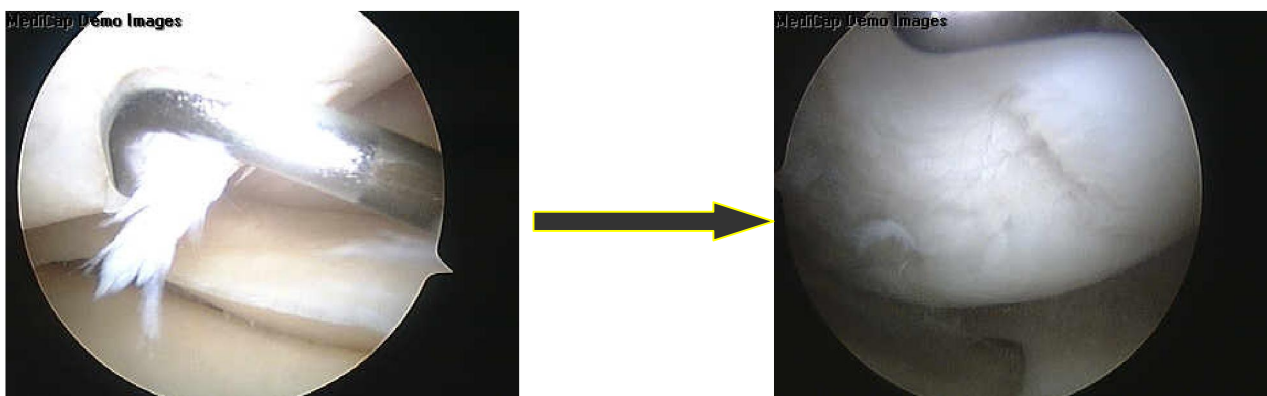
With small incision sites and direct access to most areas of the joint, a surgeon can diagnose and surgically correct a number of knee joint problems. Almost any region of the knee may be treated arthroscopically. A vast array of joint problems such as meniscal tears, cartilage damage and ligament tears can be dealt with.

Examples include:

Trimming or repair of a meniscal tear



Smoothing of damaged articular cartilage



The operation is a daystay operation so you are in and out of hospital the same day. The surgery typically takes about half an hour however you can plan to be in hospital about half the day.

The surgery is usually done under a general anaesthetic.

The recovery is variable dependant on your pain threshold and how much we need to do. It generally takes 2 – 6 weeks to recover from however it may take longer. The small incisions we use may be tender for up to 6 weeks and it maybe uncomfortable to kneel for this period.

If you have arthritis in your knee the arthroscopy is likely to improve your knee however it will not make it normal. There is a small chance your knee could be worse.

If you have torn your cartilage there is a possibility the cartilage can tear again as the cartilage left is thinner and weaker than before

If you have a sedentary job you will need approximately 1 week off work.

If you have a more active job you will need approximately 2 weeks off work.

I will typically see you two weeks after your surgery