

Unicompartmental Knee Replacement



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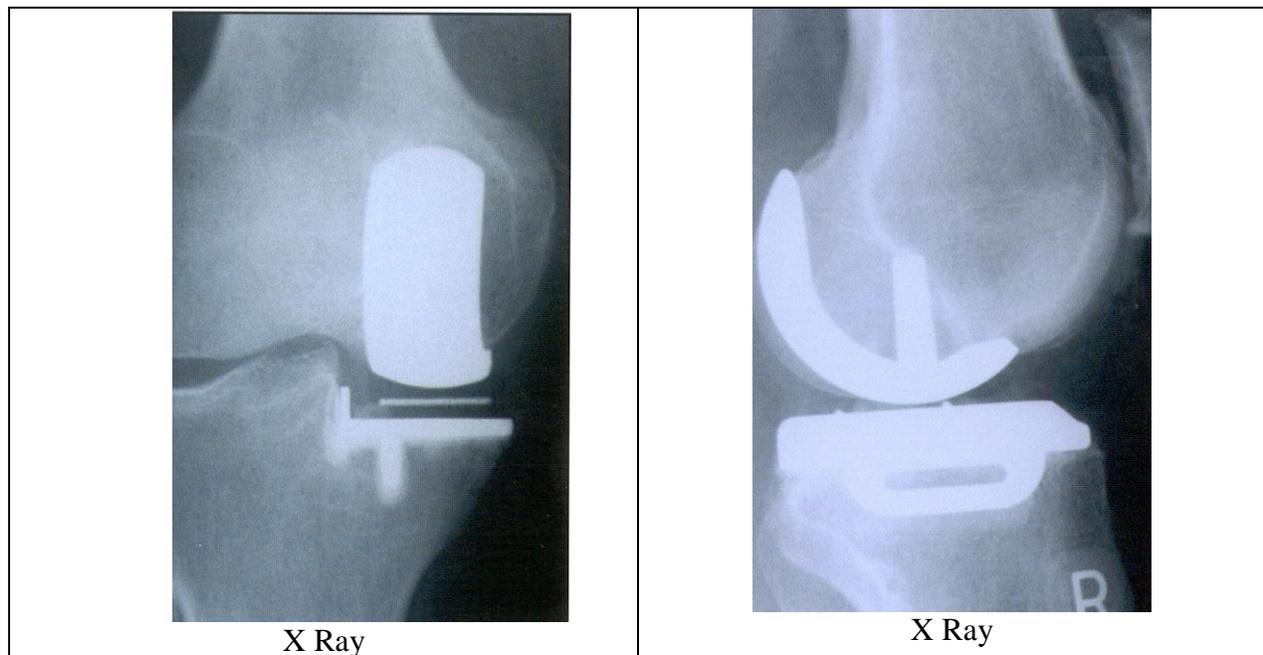
You have arthritis in the inside compartment of your knee. This has occurred because the cushioning cartilage in the knee is failing. When this occurs bones in the inside compartment of the knee joint start to rub together. This results in pain, stiffness and deformity. You may have noticed you are becoming bow legged.



When the arthritis is confined to one compartment we can replace only the arthritic area by doing a unicompartmental knee replacement. This enables us to perform the operation through a smaller incision thus it is less painful. Your recovery is faster, hospital stay shorter and your knee motion is greater than a total knee replacement. If the replacement fails with time revising a unicompartmental knee is easier than a total knee replacement.



A cut will be made over the front of your knee and the diseased cartilage and bone is exchanged for the unicompartmental knee joint replacement.



This is an excellent operation for relieving pain and restoring quality of life however it can be painful following the surgery and requires a lot of hard work and determination to get the knee moving. The end result is as dependant on the effort you put in than the operation performed by the surgeon.

Approximately 80% of people are very happy, 15% quite happy and 5% unhappy after having the operation and rehabilitation following the unicompartmental knee replacement. It can take up to 2 years to gain maximum benefit from the surgery however most people are at 70 - 80% at 6 weeks and 90% at 6 months.

Complications are not common but do occur. The most serious is an infection which is a major problem. The replacement needs to be removed and antibiotics inserted. Thankfully this only occurs in 1% of patients and we do all we can to prevent it. Other problems include blood clots, nerve injuries and stiffness and all people will have numbness around the scar. Very rarely the mobile plastic bearing can dislocate

Unicompartmental knee replacements do not last forever. Like a car tyre they wear out the more you use them. Thus you need to be sensible. High impact activities such as running and singles tennis should be avoided.

It is important for you to realise that your knee will not be normal but if all goes well and you work hard your knee will be greatly improved from the arthritic knee you currently have.