

Focal resurfacing implants to treat articular cartilage damage in the knee

Information for the public

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There is not enough evidence about how well this procedure works or how safe it is in the long term. This type of procedure can cause complications. So, it can only be done with special arrangements. This means you will have regular appointments afterwards to check how well it is working or if it has caused problems.

Articular cartilage protects the ends of the bones in the knee joint from friction during movement. Damage from injury or disease to a small (focal) area of the articular cartilage can cause pain, stiffness in the knee and reduced mobility. In this procedure, done under a general or regional anaesthetic, a surgeon makes a cut to access the knee joint. The damaged area of the cartilage and bone is removed, and replaced with a small artificial implant that restores the smooth surface (resurfacing). The aim is to reduce symptoms, allow immediate weight bearing and preserve joint function. It may also reduce or delay the need for a later knee replacement.

The [NHS website](#) may have information on your condition and treatment options.

You can [search the NHS website for information about consultants and hospitals](#) that offer this procedure.

Is this procedure right for me?

You should be included in [making decisions about your care](#).

Your healthcare professionals should explain the risks and benefits of this procedure and how it is done. They should discuss your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. They should offer you more information about the procedure. Your family or carers can be involved if you want or need them to be.

You will be asked to decide whether you agree (consent) to have the procedure. Find out more about [giving consent to treatment on the NHS website](#).

Some questions to think about

- How many appointments will I need?
- What are the possible benefits? How likely am I to get them?
- What are the risks or side effects? How likely are they?
- Will I have to stay in hospital?
- What happens if it does not work or something goes wrong?
- What happens if I do not want the procedure?
- Are other treatments available?

Information and support

- [NICE's information on interventional procedures guidance](#) explains what an interventional procedure is and how we assess it.
- [NICE's information on interventional procedures recommendations](#) explains what special arrangements are.

You can also get support from your local [Healthwatch](#).

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