

# Autologous chondrocyte implantation for treating symptomatic articular cartilage defects of the knee

Information for the public

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Autologous chondrocyte implantation (ACI) is available on the NHS as a possible treatment for symptomatic articular cartilage defects of the knee in people if:

- they have not had previous knee surgery to repair articular cartilage defects
- there is only minimal knee damage from osteoarthritis
- the defect is over 2 cm<sup>2</sup>
- the procedure is done at a specialist centre.

Articular cartilage covers the ends of the bones in a joint (such as the knee) and stops them rubbing together when you move. Cartilage damage can happen through a direct injury, often from playing sports, or through wear and tear. The aim of ACI is to make the knee joint function normally by replacing damaged cartilage with healthy cartilage grown from the patient's own cells.

## Is this treatment right for me?

Your healthcare professionals should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. Your family can be involved too, if you wish. Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

## Questions to think about

- How well does it work compared with other treatments?
- What are the risks or side effects? How likely are they?
- How will the treatment affect my day-to-day life?
- What happens if the treatment does not work?
- What happens if I do not want to have treatment? Are there other treatments available?

## Information and support

[NHS Choices](#) may be a good place to find out more.

These organisations can give you advice and support:

- [ARMA](#), 0203 856 1978
- [Arthritis Action](#), 0800 652 3188
- [Arthritis Care](#), 0808 800 4050

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