

Knee Arthritis - Affect of Gender

By Thomas J. Haverbush, M.D.
Orthopaedic Surgeon

Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Sorry to tell you this ladies, but knee arthritis develops almost two times more often in women than men as they age.

- The decline in estrogen with menopause may contribute to the upsurge in knee arthritis in older women.
- Women as they age have a lower amount of a growth factor hormone that maintains healthy bone and muscle.
- Women are more physically disabled and have more symptoms than men with the same degree of arthritis.

Knee Replacement

Women who undergo knee replacement have more advanced arthritis than men do. Surgery for severe knee arthritis is underutilized in men and women, but it is 3 times more underutilized in women than men.

Anyone facing a procedure as big as a total knee replacement has a right to be anxious, but the anxiety levels in females have always been higher in patient studies.

Then there is the factor known as "**Never catch up**". This means that patients who delay having a knee replacement for several years never achieve as good a result from the surgery when they do have it, compared with those who had it sooner.

Results of Knee Replacement

Some large studies have reported that 15 - 30% of patients have less improvement than they had expected after total knee replacement. It is well known that patients undergoing total hip replacement, as a group, are more satisfied with their surgery than patients undergoing total knee replacement.

Women and men seem to have about the same degree of satisfaction after total knee replacement even though women tend to wait longer to have surgery.

Pain

A study from the Mayo Clinic reported that women have more pain than men in the early days and weeks after total knee surgery. Younger patients of both sexes have more pain than older patients.

Female Total Knee

A company came out two years ago with a total knee only for females. It said this was needed because the anatomy of the female knee is different from a male. This is true to a minor extent. Most Orthopaedic Surgeons believe as I do that if you have a large number of different sizes of total knee prostheses you can choose the one that is correct for your women patients.

The LCS total knee prosthesis that I have used for several years has worked very well for me, because it has a large number of sizes that fit all of my women patients.

So no, I don't believe women need a specific "women's total knee".

Hopefully this discussion has given you some information you didn't know before about the differences between total knees in men and women.

In The Know

Our website www.orthopodsurgeon.com is undergoing a big renovation. This is the 97th Orthopaedic article I have written for Lakeview Area News! I have never missed a week since the beginning.

With the redesign of the website there will be a section where all the articles I have written will be cataloged by title. You will be able to easily retrieve the entire text of any article you want electronically on line.

I am really happy that all the information I have written for Lakeview Area News will be available instantly to anyone who wants to refer to an article in the archive. I will let you know when it is available.

I am happy to see all orthopaedic problems at the Lakeview Community Wellness Center in Lakeview or at the office in Alma at 315 Warwick Dr., Alma, Michigan.

Please call 989-463-6092 for information or to schedule an appointment.

Future Lakeview Community Wellness Center Clinic dates are December 18, 2009, January 8 and January 15, 2010.

Our goal is simple - To help people return to more pain free, functional lives.

Good health. Good life. All the best to you.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush