

Argus Orthopaedic Zone

Knee Pain: More Non-Surgery Options

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

Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Today I will conclude our two part class on the treatment of knee pain without surgery. I don't have any patients coming into the office *insisting* that I operate on them for knee pain! I think there must be something built into patients making them hesitant about surgery. I accept this and agree completely with this feeling that my patients have. Nevertheless, I have known some surgeons who seem to do surgery on almost every patient they see. I have never been able to figure that out. Never will either.

Anyway, I assure anyone coming to see me that I will always tell them what their choices are and explain possible options. Last time we left off our discussion with Advil, Motrin, Aleve and Naprosyn.

- **Non steroidal, prescription**

Over the years a large (and growing) group of oral medications have been developed to manage inflammation, pain and arthritis. Ibuprofen (Motrin) was one of the earliest medications. There have been too many to list here. Celebrex is one of the most popular. Do they help? Sort of, in some patients but many people I see are already on several other meds for other problems. I just hate to load them up with more --. It may not work, cause side effects and they are expensive medications.

- **Theragesic, Bio Freeze**

Two of my favorites. There are dozens as anyone who has been in a pharmacy knows. They do help some patients and are worth trying. They can help reduce aching and stiffness. No harm to try.

- **Ice, heat**

It seems to work for physical therapists. They love this. Heat for 15 minutes followed by ice for 15 minutes. We all respond differently. Try it. See what works for you.

- **Glucosamine-Chondroitin**

Osteo-Bi-Flex triple strength, two per day at once has worked best for my patients. If a person has too much arthritis it can't help. I don't tell everybody to take this as they may be wasting their money. I might recommend it after a proper exam and x-rays of the knees are done.

- **Acupuncture**

Not too many people do this, but I never down it to patients. I'm sure it does help some people so if someone wants to try it I will try to help them find a reputable place.

- **Magnetic Pulse Therapy**

It is available. Probably not covered by insurance. Expensive. I don't have a lot of patients who have used it.

- **Knee Bracing**

It ranges all the way from an ace wrap to knee supports (sleeves) you can get at a store. More specialized braces need to be prescribed after I properly evaluate the knee. They come from brace shops. If prescribed, insurance may pay for them.

- **Lidoderm patches**

They are available by prescription. Somewhat expensive if you have to pay out of pocket. They don't rub off on clothing and there is no odor.

- **Combination therapy is best.**

Many people do best when some therapies are combined. For example weight loss, physical exercise and a pain reliever or other choice from the "menu". Of course no treatment works for everybody.

Well, there you have it Dr. Haverbush's complete outline.

Office Website and Argus Orthopaedic Zone Archive

Thank you loyal readers for joining us each week. Do yourself a favor and log onto www.orthopodsurgeon.com.

It contains a world of musculoskeletal information you and your family and friends can use! Website, Your Orthopaedic Connection, Archive of all previous Argus articles. Please check it out. Be well.

Dr. Haverbush