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For Immediate Release

January 16, 2008

## **Knee Replacement Options Expanding**

*Partial Knee Replacements are growing in success and patient satisfaction.*

**ROSEMONT, IL** - Due to advances in surgical procedures and technology, partial knee replacement is becoming a popular alternative to full knee replacement in patients with knee arthritis. A paper published in the January 2008 [Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons](#) found more people who suffer from arthritis are now benefiting from this surgery. Previously this procedure was performed mainly on patients who were older and who lived a more sedentary lifestyle.

Partial knee replacements, also known as [unicompartmental knee arthroplasty](#), are used to ease the pain and discomfort that accompany arthritis in the knee joint. Arthritis is the leading cause of disability in the United States, affecting more than 70 million adults. The knee is one of the most commonly affected joints in the body.

When partial knee replacement procedures were first implemented in the 1970s, the majority of surgical candidates had to meet specific requirements:

- 1 Severe localized arthritis
- 2 60+ years old
- 3 Low activity demand
- 4 Not be overweight

However, as advances are being made in the procedure even baby boomers are now benefiting from partial knee replacements. "A major challenge in orthopaedics is treating younger patients with knee replacements," said Dr. Todd Borus, co-author of the study and a candidate member with the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. "With baby boomers being more active and wearing out their knees earlier, partial knee replacements are an option in treating these younger and more active patients." Dr. Borus is an orthopaedic surgeon at Northwest Surgical Specialists in Vancouver, Washington.

In the past total knee replacements have become one of the most common orthopaedic procedures performed on older people, but partial replacements are becoming more attractive for patients due to:

- 1 Higher patient satisfaction
- 2 Preserving a more normal knee motion
- 3 Less blood loss during surgery
- 4 Accelerated rehabilitation and recovery time

As technology advances in the operating room minimally invasive variations of the partial knee

replacement are also being used. In addition, some surgeons are getting aid from computers in the operating room. The paper points out the need to further study both minimally invasive and computer-assisted partial knee replacements, since more time is needed to review those surgical outcomes.

Dr. Borus points out that even though more patients are being accepted for partial knee replacements they are not for everyone. “The criteria for partial knee replacements are still relatively strict. The arthritis has to be well confined to one part of the knee. Even though the techniques and implants are improving, not everyone is a candidate.”

Disclosure: Dr. Borus received no compensation for this study.

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