



Articular Cartilage Problems of the Knee

Introduction



Welcome to BodyZone Physiotherapy's patient resource about Articular Cartilage Problems of the Knee.

Articular cartilage problems in the knee joint are common. Injured areas, called lesions, often show up as tears on the surface of the cartilage. If a tear goes all the way through the cartilage, surgeons call it a full-thickness lesion.

this happens, surgery is usually recommended. However, these operations are challenging. Repair and rehabilitation are difficult. Your surgeon will consider many factors when determining the procedure that's best for you.

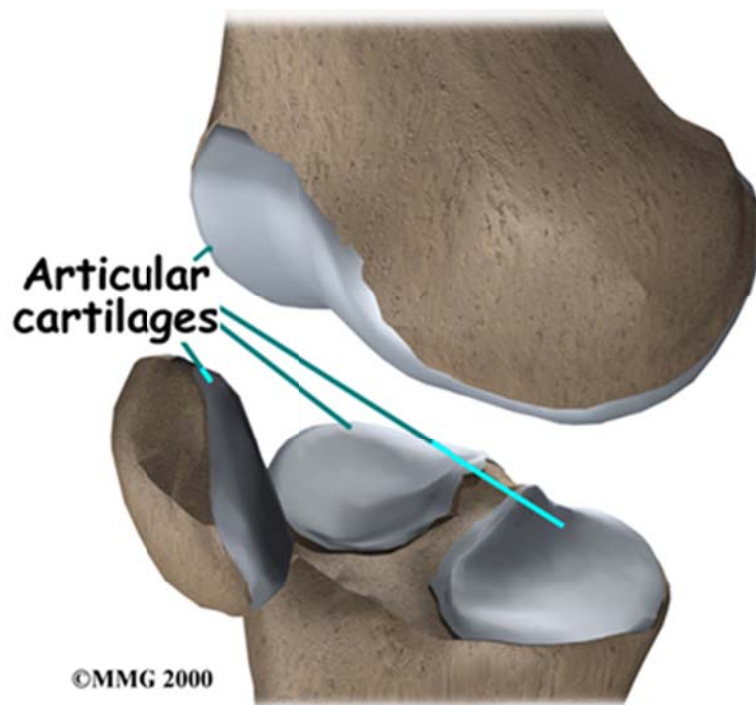
This guide will help you understand:

- what your surgeon hopes to achieve
- what happens during the procedure
- what to expect after surgery

Anatomy

Where is the articular cartilage, and what does it do?

Articular cartilage covers the ends of bones. It has a smooth, slippery surface, which allows the bones of the knee to slide over each other without rubbing. This slick surface is designed to minimize pressure and friction as you move.



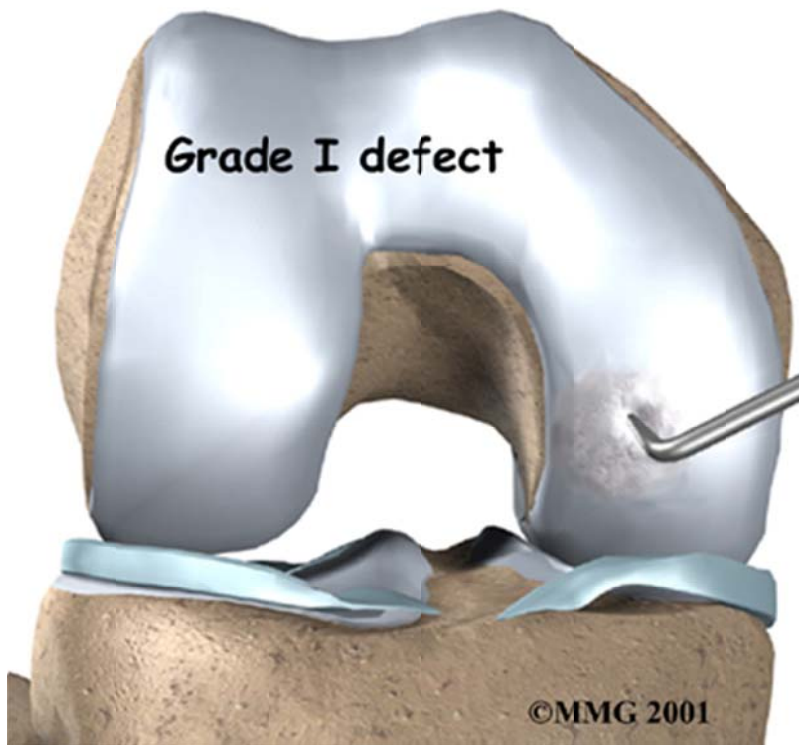
When the surface of the cartilage is injured, it is usually not painful at first. This is because cartilage tissues are not rich with nerves. However, any holes or rough spots in the cartilage can throw off the intricate design of the joint. If the joint can become inflamed and painful. If the injury, or lesion, is large enough, the bone below the cartilage loses its protection, and pressure and strain on this unprotected portion of the bone can also become a source of pain. Finally, if a cartilage injury isn't treated, it may eventually cause other problems in the joint.

Surgeons classify defects in the knee cartilage using a grading scale from I (one) to IV (four). In a grade I tear, the cartilage has a soft spot. Grade II lesions show minor tears in the surface of the cartilage. Grade III lesions have deep crevices.

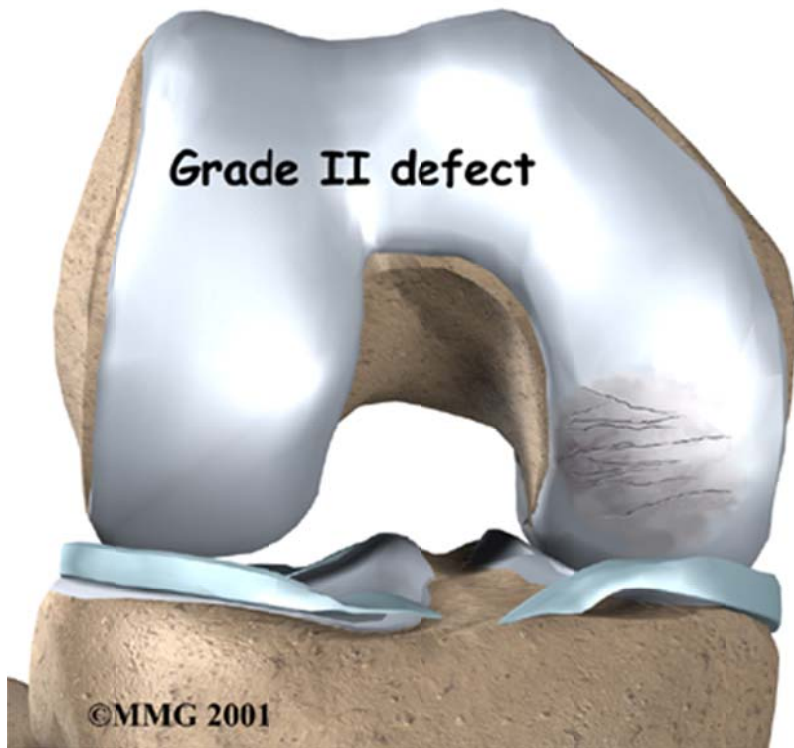
grade IV lesions, the tear goes all the way to the underlying bone.

The following images show each type of defect

Grade I



Grade II



Grade III