KNEE ARTHROSCOPY: TORN MENISCUS
TREATMENT
Anya Duroha, Biomedical Engineering, University of Rhode Island
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Knee arthroscopy proves to be a most effective form to treat injuries regarding joints. Annually, due to the rising 200,000 cases the US faces, more people depend on the simple, minimally invasive technique to soothe their pain.

I. WHAT IS IT AND HOW IS IT CAUSED?

The meniscus is a c shaped rubbery ligament that cushions the knee joint and prevents wear and tear between the femur, the tibia and the fibula. A tear is this meniscus arises from various situation. Firstly, as we get older the meniscus gets weaker and worn out so the elderly are likely to have it, often of age 40+. Secondly, forceful twisting or rotations of the knee due to sports activities can give rise to it. Thirdly, heavy lifting and also arthritis is cases.

II. SYMPTOMS

The symptoms of a torn meniscus often vary from moderate to severe. A tear of a small degree is followed by slight pain and swelling around the knee, as it worsens stiffness follows as well limit to knee mobility, locking of the joint and a wobbly feeling.

III. TREATMENTS

Various forms of treatments fit the needs of patients depending on how severe the tear is. They include; therapies, medication, self-care and more invasive techniques like surgery. A knee arthroscopy is the most effective form listed. It is a simple surgery performed by an orthopedic surgeon which takes about 45-90 minutes. A sedative is used during this procedure.

The surgery begins by drilling 3 holes around the lateral and medial sides of the knee joint, each hole for the arthroscope, an irrigating instrument and a trimming instrument. Next the irrigating instrument is used to inject a sterile solution to push surfaces apart. The arthroscope is passed through another hole to the deep joint and project on a screen for the surgeon to see. Next the surgeon uses the trimming instrument to shave out the tear and smoothen the meniscus. After this all 3 instruments are removed and the surgeon does a check up to ensure no bleeding. Lastly sutures are used to seal the openings, the patient is taken to the recovery area for monitoring and given pain medications.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

Aside from these treatments others include; glucosamine and chondroitin, viscosupplementation - involves injection of hyaluronic acid to help lubricate joints - and total knee replacement. As with many treatments there are often pros and cons the patient faces. Knee arthroscopy is minimally invasive procedure that is highly effective. It is also beneficial to the patient because often times the joint would need to be cleaned out to get rid of unwanted tissue in the cavity. It has estimated cost of about $5000 and the average recovery time is about 4-6 weeks with physical therapy. However there will still be some amount of pain and trauma the patient will face and the treatment is inferior to the total knee replacement procedure.

In 2002, the New England Journal of Medicine was howled at by many orthopedic surgeons because there was a misconception that patients didn’t prefer this minimally invasive treatment, on the other hand, more than one million procedures are performed each year according to the Arthroscopy Association of North America. It is one of the highest volume of orthopedic procedures in the U.S.

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