

00:00-00:18 JONES

Each year orthopedic surgeons perform thousands of total knee replacements but there is another option for patients who have knee pain. Partial knee replacement can be just as effective and less invasive. Dr. Joshua Landau's an orthopedic surgeon at Murphy Wainer Orthopedic Specialists and part of the Cone Health family and he's here to talk about it. Good morning.

00:18-00:19 LANDAU

Thank you, Brad.

00:19-00:29 JONES

A lot of people come in and they've got pain and things like that and they automatically, I guess, assume the worst: Oh, this is going to be this total replacement and keep me out for a long time. You've got a lot of other options, don't you?

00:29-00:57 LANDAU

So typically when people present with arthritis, it's aching pain on the inside of the knee, particularly at night time, worse with activities. We've seen it come on anywhere from 40 year olds on up. And so the conservative treatment or the non-surgery options are typically injections, anti-inflammatories, maybe braces, weight loss. When those things don't work then we're looking at surgery options, and the real critical question is, how much of the knee has been lost to the arthritis.

00:57-00:58 JONES

Okay.

00:58-01:08 LANDAU

So this is an example where you can see the inside part of the left knee here has lost the cushion. [JONES: Yeah] On this one it looks normal.

01:08-01:14 JONES

Yeah, you want to pull it around just a little bit, like, there you go, like that right there. Okay, so which one – this one over here has lost the cushion?

01:14-01:41 LANDAU

So the cushion has been lost here on this inside part. [JONES: Right, okay.] And when we test the knee, looking to see, is it, does the outside part keep the cartilage or not? Then you can see that the outside part, when you push on it, even still maintains the space, and the inside part corrects. [JONES: Okay.] And so the big distinction being whether or not you're in need of a total knee replacement.

01:41-01:48 JONES

Okay, now this is, this is where you're literally taking that knee joint out and replacing everything in there. And this has been around for a while, right?

01:48-01:58 LANDAU

Correct. You basically have to shave out the entire part – all the different surfaces of the knee, even some of the ligaments, and then replace them with metal and plastic parts.

01:58-2:01 JONES

Okay, now you've got, I guess, the junior version here, the partial, right?

02:01-02:05 LANDAU

Right, so the alternative is that you can do a partial knee replacement.

02:05-02:13 JONES

So now let's take a look at this one. This one – a lot of the original is still there, right? And you're just replacing that one part there.

02:13-02:28 LANDAU

Correct. So, you leave the outside part, you leave the kneecap, you leave the ligaments, and you just have to replace – so the big advantage is that it's a much faster operation. It takes about an overnight recovery in the hospital, go home the same day.

02:28-02:34 JONES

I was going to ask you about recovery. So you're saying overnight in the hospital, and go home, versus how long for a total knee replacement?

02:34-02:59 LANDAU

So it's variable. Typically it's anywhere from two to three days in the hospital, but the total recovery time is really what matters. And the recovery on a partial is about half of what it is for a total. And so the big advantage is that you keep your own ligaments, you keep the good parts of your knee so the actual knee range of motion, the mechanics remains the same. So it's been probably the best change in my practice that I've seen.

02:59-03:10 JONES

Is someone a better candidate for a partial if they're having pain and they go to the doctor and say, "I need to get something done about this?" Can you kind of progress where this [pointing to partial] isn't going to help you anymore and you have to go to this [pointing to full]?

03:10-03:28 LANDAU

So it really depends on – you have to have intact ligaments, and the rest of the knee has to be in good condition. [JONES: Okay.] And as long as those criteria are met we are not finding that – the partial is not a stepping stone to a total. [JONES: Okay.] The partials are lasting ten, twenty, even thirty years, and we've got data that long.

03:27-03:32 JONES

You've got some new materials in there that these are even better than the ones that doctors started with, right?

03:32-03:39 LANDAU

So we've been updating the materials – the plastic parts both in totals and partials have really improved over the course of the last 15 years or so.

03:39-03:49 JONES

So this is, it's not a routine thing, but it's something that really gives somebody an option. As you said, there are things non-surgical that you can try before this too, right?

03:49-04:02 LANDAU

Correct. Correct. And I would say that as we learn more about the partials, the number of people who are eligible, we're realizing, are really a lot more than we used to think. And so it's been a great operation to offer people in my practice.

04:02-04:08 JONES

Doctor, thanks for telling us about it. It's neat to see the visuals too, because you see just how quickly somebody can recover from that. We appreciate you coming in.

04:08-04:09 LANDAU

Okay, thank you Brad.

04:09-04:30 JONES

Well you can find out more about knee pain and maybe steps to kind of help you feel a little better: Steps to a Healthy Knee. It's a video, and the folks at Cone Health put them online so you can check them out at any time, even share them with others. Find it at conehealth.com/wellness-on-demand and remember wellness-on-demand has those dashes, but once again it's available starting tomorrow.