

# Arthroscopic Meniscal Surgery

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## KEY POINTS

- Arthroscopic meniscal surgery is a procedure done with a scope put into your knee through small cuts to repair or remove a damaged meniscus. A meniscus is a piece of cartilage in the middle of the knee that cushions the surfaces of joints.
  - The procedure is done when you have a damaged meniscus in your knee that causes knee pain and locking and limits movement of your knee.
  - Ask your provider how long it will take to recover and how to take care of yourself at home.
  - Make sure you know what symptoms or problems you should watch for and what to do if you have them.
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## What is an arthroscopic meniscal surgery?

Arthroscopic meniscal surgery is a procedure done with a scope put into your knee through small cuts to repair or remove a damaged meniscus. A meniscus is a piece of cartilage in the middle of the knee that cushions the surfaces of joints. You have a meniscus on the inner side of your knee and on the outer side of the knee. They act as shock absorbers during weight-bearing activities such as walking, running, or jumping.

## When is it used?

The procedure is done when you have a damaged meniscus in your knee that causes swelling, knee pain and locking, and limited knee movement.

## How do I prepare for this procedure?

- Make plans for your care and recovery after you have the procedure. Find someone to give you a ride home after the procedure. Allow for time to rest and try to find other people to help with your day-to-day tasks while you recover.
- You may or may not need to take your regular medicines the day of the procedure. Tell your healthcare provider about all medicines and supplements that you take. Some products may increase your risk of side effects. Ask your healthcare provider if you need to avoid taking any medicine or supplements before the procedure.
- Tell your healthcare provider if you have any food, medicine, or other allergies such as latex.
- Your healthcare provider will tell you when to stop eating and drinking before the procedure. This helps to keep you from vomiting during the procedure.

- Follow your provider's instructions about not smoking before and after the procedure. Smokers may have more breathing problems during the procedure and heal more slowly. It's best to quit 6 to 8 weeks before surgery.
- Follow any other instructions your healthcare provider gives you.
- Ask any questions you have before the procedure. You should understand what your healthcare provider is going to do. You have the right to make decisions about your healthcare and to give permission for any tests or procedures.

## **What happens during the procedure?**

You will be given medicine called anesthesia to keep from feeling pain during the procedure.

- Local and regional anesthesia numbs your knee. If you have regional anesthesia, you may also be given medicine to help you relax. The medicine can make you drowsy or you may fall asleep before the procedure.
- General anesthesia relaxes your muscles and puts you into a deep sleep.

Your provider will make several small cuts near your knee. Your provider will put fluid in the knee so that it is easier to see with an arthroscope, which is a lighted tube with a camera. Your provider can put the scope and tools through the small cuts to repair or remove the meniscus.

After the procedure your provider will close the small cuts with stitches or sticky tape.

## **What happens after the procedure?**

You can usually go home the same day as your surgery. You will need to use crutches as directed by your healthcare provider. You may need to do physical therapy exercises for a few months to help make the joint strong again.

Follow your healthcare provider's instructions. Ask your provider:

- How long it will take to recover
- If there are activities you should avoid and when you can return to normal activities
- How to take care of yourself at home
- What symptoms or problems you should watch for and what to do if you have them

Make sure you know when you should come back for a checkup. Keep all appointments for provider visits or tests.

## **What are the risks of this procedure?**

Every procedure or treatment has risks. Some possible risks of this procedure include:

- You may have problems with anesthesia.
- You may have an infection, bleeding, or blood clots.

Ask your healthcare provider how these risks apply to you. Be sure to discuss any other questions or concerns that you may have.

*This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.*

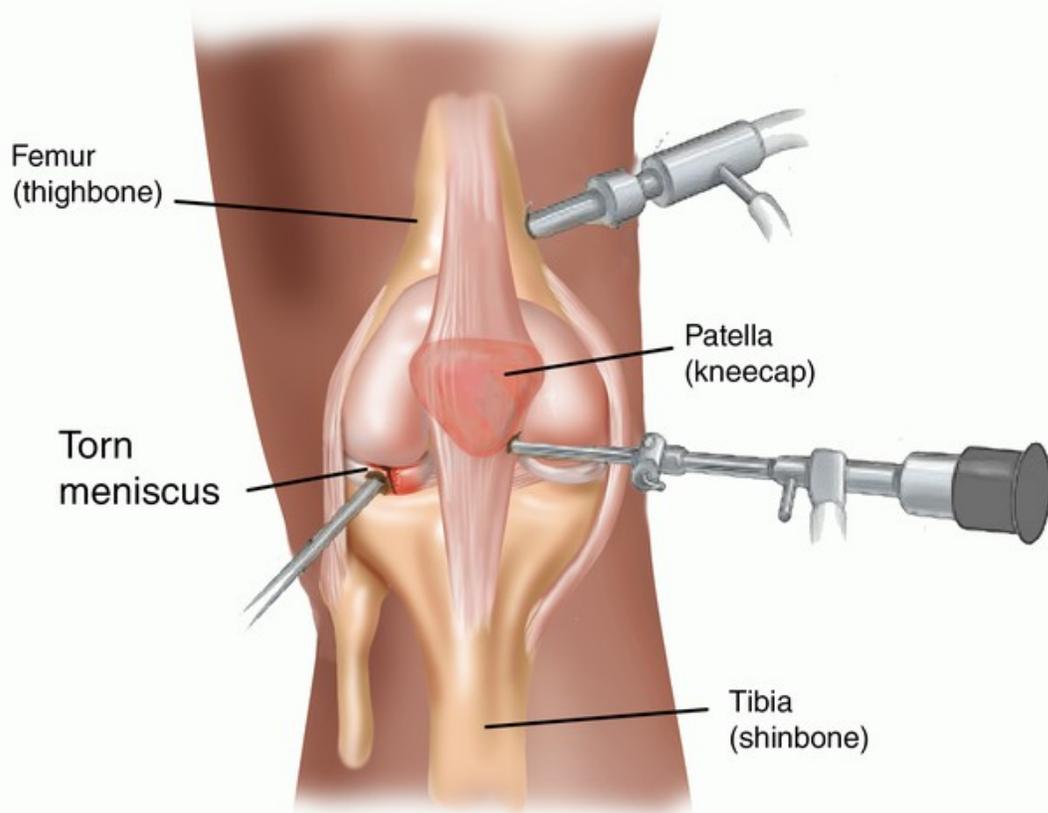
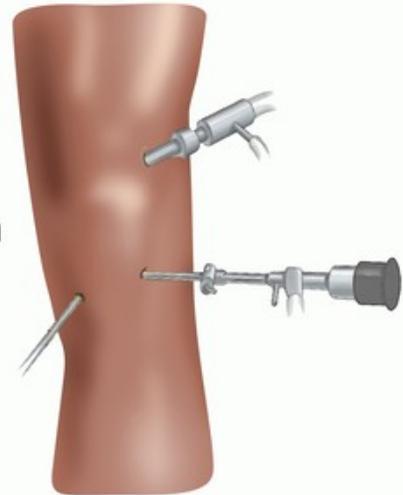
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