



**My Knee Doc**  
SPECIALIST KNEE SURGEON

# Guide to Knee Replacement Surgery

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**BY GARETH STABLES FRCS (ED) T&O**



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# Introduction

In this exclusive Special Guide prepared for people like you, runners, golfers, bowlers, walkers, grand-parents, and exercise enthusiasts, who are struggling with the pain, loss of mobility and loss of independence brought about by knee arthritis. I share with you the exact information that I have used to help my patients decide that knee replacement surgery is the right choice for them.

It's a "reference manual" that I recommend you print out and keep safe so you can constantly refer back to it. Read it to find out more about knee replacement surgery and how it can help you, the alternatives and the risks and benefits.

The first thing I want you to know is that if you are frustrated, feel stuck, or just not sure what to do next for the best, then you are NOT alone. That's how just about everyone I've ever met in my clinic, starts out. By giving you this information I hope to make it easier for you to understand your options and help you make the right decisions about your health.

I'm letting you have this guide for FREE. The information is intended to help you make the choices that will help you get back to the active lifestyle you enjoy, without the constant pain of arthritis

Truth is, without knowing you or your medical history intimately, I cannot tell you if knee replacement surgery is right for you. What I do know from my years of experience is that it can and does help people like you who are suffering from knee arthritis get rid of their pain and get back their quality of life that they thought they had lost.

So here's my challenge to you, now that you have this knowledge in your hands, take the time to read it. Consider your options. If you need more information, see your doctor, speak to a specialist or get in touch with us. Don't let your knee arthritis continue to control your life, get back in the driving seat and do something now so you can live the life you want to lead.

Be reassured that for most people knee replacement surgery is a safe, reliable treatment that has allowed them to get back to a better life feeling better, fitter and healthier.

## About the author



My name is **Gareth Stables** and I am the consultant orthopedic surgeon at the Cheshire & Merseyside NHS Treatment Centre. I also treat patients at the Spire Cheshire Hospital, Spire Manchester Hospital and The Wilmslow Hospital.

I trained at the University of Liverpool and completed my specialist Orthopedic training in Cheshire and Merseyside, before undertaking a specialist fellowship training in knee and hip surgery at the internationally renowned specialist orthopaedic centre at Wrightington Hospital.

I completed a further fellowship in specialist knee surgery at the Leeds University Teaching Hospital, the largest teaching hospital, in Europe!

This specialist training has enabled me to give my patients the best possible treatment for sports knee injuries, knee re-alignment surgery, and knee replacement surgery.



## What is knee arthritis?

Arthritis is a group of conditions that cause damage to your joints.

The most common type of arthritis is osteoarthritis, where there is gradual wear and tear of a joint. For a few people this is a result of a previous injury but usually, it happens without an obvious cause. Some other types of arthritis are associated with inflammation of the joints that can eventually lead to severe joint damage. The most common inflammatory arthritis is rheumatoid arthritis. Arthritis eventually wears away the normal cartilage covering the surface of the joint and the bone underneath becomes damaged. This causes pain and stiffness in the joint, which can interfere with your normal activities.

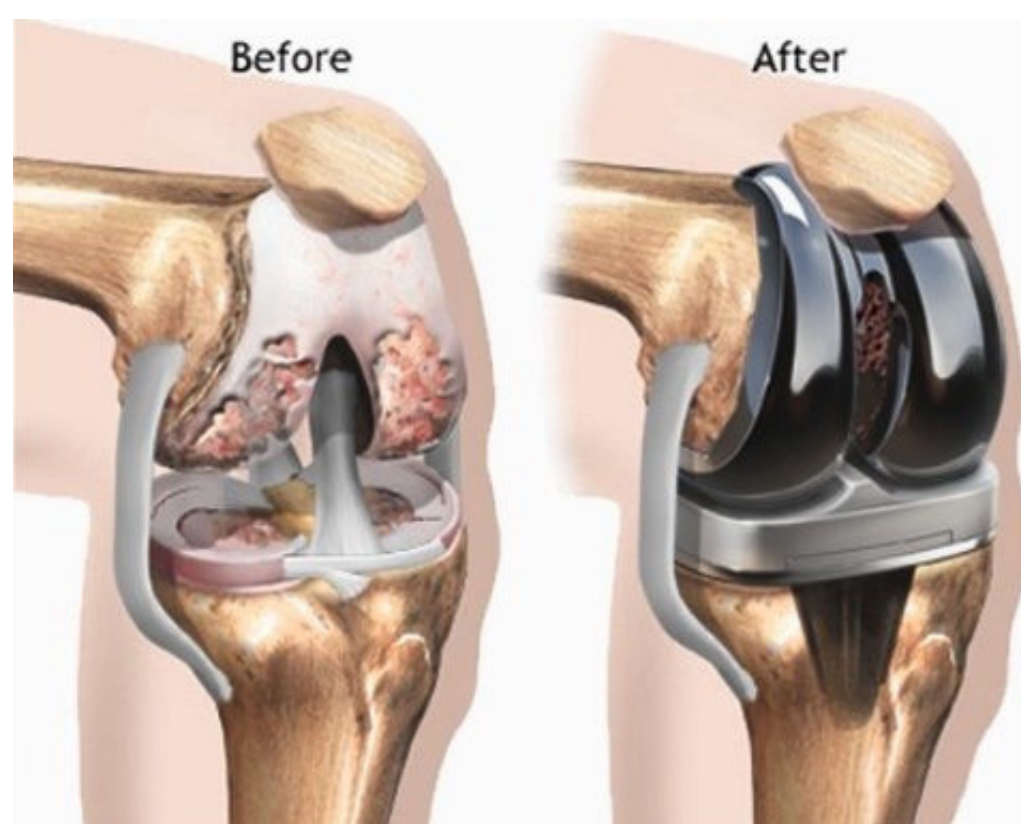
## What is a knee replacement?

There are many different types of knee replacement available and your surgeon should discuss with you which sort is best for you.

Your surgeon will make a cut on the front of your knee and remove the damaged joint surfaces. They will replace these with an artificial knee joint made of metal, plastic or ceramic, or a combination of these materials.

Your knee replacement is fixed to the bone using acrylic cement or special coatings on your knee replacement that bond directly to the bone.

Your surgeon will close your skin with stitches or clips.



## **What are the benefits to surgery?**

Having looked after many patients with knee arthritis and after having performed numerous knee replacement operations, I know that most of my patients are very happy with the outcome of their surgery.

Their arthritis pain is cured and most people see an improvement in their mobility and activity levels. Many even come back to have the other knee done!

## **What can I do to help make the operation a success?**

It is important that you understand how the operation might affect you, so you can take an active part in your recovery.

If you smoke, stopping smoking for several weeks or more before the operation may reduce your risk of developing complications and will improve your long-term health.

Try to maintain a healthy weight. You have a higher risk of developing complications if you are overweight.

Regular exercise should help to prepare you for the operation, help you to recover and improve your long-term health. Follow the advice of the healthcare team on how to make yourself as fit as possible for the operation.

**Early diagnosis = Early Treatment  
= Faster recovery**

## **Are there any alternatives to surgery?**

Simple painkillers such as paracetamol and anti-inflammatory painkillers such as ibuprofen can help control the pain of arthritis. Supplements to your diet, such as fish oil, glucosamine or avocado soybean unsaponifiables may also help relieve your symptoms. Check with your doctor before you take supplements.

**Using a walking stick** on the opposite side to the affected knee can make walking easier. Wearing an elasticated support on your knee can help it feel stronger.

**Regular moderate exercise** can help to reduce stiffness in your knee. Physiotherapy may help to strengthen weak muscles.

**A steroid injection** into your knee joint can sometimes reduce pain and stiffness for several months. You may get side effects if you have injections too often.

All these measures become less effective if your arthritis gets worse and this is when your surgeon may recommend a knee replacement.

**Early diagnosis = Early Treatment  
= Faster recovery**



## What if I decide not to have the operation?

Arthritis of your knee usually, though not always, gets worse with time. Arthritis is not life-threatening in itself but it can be disabling.

## What are the risks?

Knee replacement surgery is widely performed and is generally a safe operation with excellent results.

The complication rate following total knee replacement is low. Serious complications occur in **fewer than 2%** of patients.

Possible complications are infection, blood clots, bleeding, damage to blood vessels and nerves around the knee, numbness around the scar and leg. The implants can loosen with time and a “re-do” operation may be needed.

These complications are rare, however, and the vast majority of patients experience excellent pain relief following knee replacement.

Remember to discuss your concerns thoroughly with your orthopaedic surgeon prior to surgery.

I'd been using a walking stick for years because of my knee arthritis. Now I can walk up and down stairs and to the shops and I don't need my stick anymore! I can't thank Mr Stables enough.

MS - 6 weeks after knee replacement

## **What can you expect if you come to see me?**

When you book a consultation to see me about your knee it means that you will see me! Not a junior doctor, a physiotherapist, or another specialist.

Whether you have booked a morning, afternoon or evening appointment you will get my full and undivided attention.

My secretary will contact you to confirm your appointment time, and will also be able to help with any questions you may have about the appointment.

There is ample FREE parking at both Spire Cheshire and The Wilmslow Hospital. When you arrive you will be greeted by our friendly reception team who will check your details and make sure you are comfortable and have everything you need.

## **Your consultation**

I will see you in the outpatient clinic where I will take time to get to know you, find out about your injury, your symptoms and how they are affecting you.

Coming to my private clinic means that you will be seen by me, an experienced specialist knee surgeon, in a comfortable environment. Your appointment will not be rushed, you will have time to have all your questions answered. I get to know all of my patients and I find this is important when helping you decide on your treatment.

I will examine your knee joint and perform some special tests to specifically look for signs of arthritis, cartilage tears and other injuries.

## Will I need an X-ray?

Most of the time I will be able to make the diagnosis during this appointment but will usually suggest some specialist investigations such as an X-ray. This will confirm the diagnosis and also assess your knee to see if there are any deformities or problems with alignment.

I will arrange the X-ray and will usually be able to see you on the same day or within a week with the results of your investigation.

All of the tests I arrange for my patients will also be looked at and reported on by an extremely experienced specialist radiology consultant. These consultants are highly regarded and work with Premier League football clubs and Super League rugby clubs as well as with other elite sportspeople.

## What happens next?

I will explain your diagnosis to you. I will take time to make sure you fully understand. I will explain the different treatment options available to you and we'll chat about the pros and cons of each. This is a very important step and by seeing me in my private clinic means that we have time to do this without any time pressures. Understanding your diagnosis, and your treatment options will help you decide on the treatment plan that's right for you.

**" I'll make sure you fully understand your diagnosis and treatment options"**

I appreciate that there is often a lot of information for you to take in. I have found that many of my patients like to have some written information that they can read at home. I will provide you with this information about knee replacement surgery and will always provide you with a copy of our consultation and any X-ray reports etc. so you have a record of your appointment.

## **When do I decide on my treatment?**

Decisions about treatment should not be rushed. You need time to think and weigh up your options. I offer all my patients a "cooling-off" period before they decide on their definitive treatment plan. This gives you a chance to discuss your decisions with friends and family. This is followed up by an appointment to give you a chance to go through your options and discuss your treatment choices and finally decide on the right way forward for you.

## **Who will my GP refer me to?**

NHS GP's in Cheshire and Manchester have to make all referrals through a musculoskeletal triage system rather than directly to a consultant knee specialist in a hospital. You will usually be seen by a physiotherapist or GP who has had training in the management of common bone and joint conditions.

They may well be able to help sort your knee pain out. If they feel you need surgery or they need further advice about the how treat your knee pain they can refer you to a consultant knee specialist



## Can I see a consultant straight away?

It can sometimes be difficult to get in to see your GP or you may not be happy with their treatment or advice so what are your other options?

It is possible to see a consultant knee specialist directly if you are happy to pay to see them privately. If you have health insurance, depending on your policy, they can either refer you directly to a specialist or ask you to get a private referral from your GP.

A private knee specialist can usually see you within a week or so and can organise tests within a couple of days. They can then come up with a treatment plan for you.

**" Getting the right treatment at the right time is key to a speedy recovery"**

"The whole experience from start to finish was fantastic. Mr. Stables is a very friendly consultant who explained everything to me and what to expect. I'm delighted with the result!"

## How can I book an appointment?

I have a choice of clinic locations for your convenience, and you can choose from morning , afternoon or evening appointments.

The Wilmslow Hospital  
52 Alderley Road  
Wilmslow  
SK9 1NY

Spire Cheshire Hospital  
Fir Tree Close  
Stretton  
WA4 4LU

**Simply call or email to arrange an appointment to see me**



[info@mykneedoc.co.uk](mailto:info@mykneedoc.co.uk)



0161 464 6399