



PHYSICIANS HOSPITAL SYSTEM

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UNITY MEDICAL AND SURGICAL HOSPITAL OFFERS MINI-KNEE PROCEDURE

Surgery Option Means Less Pain, Shorter Recovery for Patients

Mishawaka, IN – Dec 14, 2009 -- Physicians Hospital System (PHS), a network of physician-owned healthcare facilities providing a continuum of care to patients in northern Indiana and southern Michigan, announced today that the orthopedic knee procedure known as the “mini-knee procedure” will be offered at its Unity Medical and Surgical Hospital will perform

The surgery is a minimally invasive procedure using the Solo partial-knee implant that features a smaller incision disturbing less tissue in the knee. The result is a faster and less taxing recovery for the patient.

Developed by South Bend orthopedic surgeon, Ron Clark, M.D., the mini-knee procedure is an alternative to the typical partial knee replacement. In the mini-knee procedure, only the most damaged areas of cartilage are replaced instead of the entire joint.

“The knees are the largest joint in the body and endure heavy wear and tear from work, sports, injury and disease, such as arthritis, or a deformity,” said Dr. Clark. “When I started doing partial knee implants, I thought there had to be a better way to do the procedure. I came up with a concept to do it through a smaller incision and use the arthroscope, which is a surgical tool about the size of a ball point pen that is fitted with a tiny camera.

“Though using the device is a little more challenging for the surgeon, it is certainly preferable for the patient, who can walk away with a 1-1/2-inch incision instead of up to 4 inches,” Dr. Clark said. “I did comparison evaluations with traditional partial knee replacements and the new arthroscopic assisted technique. I found accelerated recovery and decreased pain with the arthroscopic assisted group of patients.” The FDA approved use of the device in 2008.

“The ideal candidate for a partial knee replacement with the Solo implant is a patient with deterioration on one side of the knee,” Dr. Clark said. “The technology is especially exciting news for younger patients, those 60 and younger, who can get relief while staving off a total knee replacement, which is likely to be needed later.

"Many times, patients postpone major knee surgery because they are told they are too young and that they have to wait," Clark says. "That's because when you operate on a knee you remove bone that can never be replaced. This system removes very little bone so it should not last the entire life of the patient, and it has the advantage of being interchangeable to other types of knee devices so that patients have more options."

Dr. Clark performs surgeries at Unity Medical and Surgical Hospital (UMSH) in Mishawaka. UMSH is an acute care surgical hospital offering five star quality, a streamlined diagnostic imaging center and the latest in technology advancements.

About Physicians Hospital System--

Physicians Hospital System (PHS) is a network of physician-owned facilities providing a continuum of care to patients in north central Indiana and southern Michigan. Made up of physician practices and clinics, PHS features Doctors Hospital and Neuromuscular Center in Bremen, Indiana; RiverCrest Specialty Hospital and Unity Medical and Surgical Hospital, both in Mishawaka, Indiana. PHS facilities provide general, orthopedic and spine surgery, neuromuscular treatment and long-term acute care. To learn more, visit our web site: <http://www.physicianshospitalsystem.com>.