KNEE ARTHROSCOPY

Why would I need an Arthroscopy?

Do you have pain, clicking, popping, locking, buckling / giving way or swelling in your knee joint? These are often symptoms of trauma to the knee. Locking in the knee is specifically caused by torn cartilage getting caught between the bones. It is common to tear a cartilage without recalling any specific injury or event. Young healthy cartilage is usually a lot tougher and harder to tear, thus the cause for this age group is most likely to be from injury / trauma and repeated trauma.

Any diagnosis of meniscal or cartilage tear is made on examination with an MRI scan by an orthopaedic surgeon.

The treatment options can be driven by age, health severity of condition and the patient's level of daily activities. Cartilage tears do not generally heal by themselves. They can respond to immobilisation, rest and physiotherapy rehabilitation. The use of anti-inflammatory (NSAIDS) medications and maintaining good muscle tone can be of benefit to recovery. However, symptoms can often reappear when resuming normal activities.

For injuries with severe symptoms then further treatment with arthroscopy is the best option.
After surgery, there will be some residual symptoms including occasional clicks, popping without pain and slight swelling. Unfortunately, no surgery can return a damaged joint to its original function.

What is a knee Arthroscopy?

A knee arthroscopy is a surgical procedure done via keyhole that allows Dr Ramsay to view the knee joint without having to make a large incision through the skin and other soft tissue.

What happens during a knee Arthroscopy?

Dr Ramsay will make small incisions in your knee and insert an arthroscope into one incision and the instruments needed into the other incision. The arthroscope can detect the torn cartilage. A cartilage tear is usually not repairable. Small instruments are inserted and the torn part of the cartilage is removed, leaving the unaffected parts of the cartilage behind. Any shaving, cutting, grasping and meniscus repair are also done during an arthroscopy as required.

Most patients can return home on the same day as the surgery. You will need to bring crutches for your discharge home. Patients who have office jobs, sedentary work or those who work for themselves can go to work and drive within the next 1 - 3 days.

Manual labour and sport activities require 3 - 6 weeks of recovery depending on the patient's age and motivation.

What to expect after your operation

It is normal to feel some pain and have swelling. Your knee may be swollen and stiff for 1 - 2 weeks after your operation. It is important to take regular pain medication and elevate during this period. You may be prescribed some medication for short term pain relief. Apply ice regularly to help with pain and swelling. Follow your post surgery information in paperwork.

Please email photos to surgery@indllieclinic.com.au if you experience any of the following:

- Increased redness or swelling
- Incision / wound weeping