

Arthroscopic Surgery

Arthroscopic surgery is a minimally invasive technique used by orthopaedic surgeons to address injuries and abnormalities within the joint space of your knees, shoulders, wrists, ankles, and hips.

This type of surgery provides a very detailed image of the joint surface and contents through very small incisions in the skin measuring about 0.5 cm (1/4 inch) in length each. Dr. Jones may use two to three incision sites located in different areas around the joint in order to gain access to the joint space to address any problems that he/she might discover at the time of your surgery.

During your procedure a small camera is inserted into the joint and a water based solution is pumped into the joint space to keep it expanded and provide the best view for Dr. Jones. The other incision sites are used for instruments that will aid Dr. Jones in addressing any abnormalities found.

Most arthroscopic surgeries can be performed under sedation (similar to the sedation used during wisdom teeth extraction or a colonoscopy) and local anesthetic. Some arthroscopic procedures require more comprehensive anesthesia such a nerve block of the extremity involved paired with sedation. General anesthesia (being "put to sleep") is rarely used during arthroscopic surgery.

During your procedure Dr. Jones has the ability to take photographs of your joint and will go over these with you at your first postoperative appointment. These photographs will help him explain your problem more precisely and will give you an opportunity to see "before and after" photos of any areas of abnormality addressed at the time of surgery.

Because arthroscopic surgery is minimally invasive in most cases rehabilitation from surgery is fairly short and uncomplicated. In general patients recover in about 4-6 weeks although it may take up to 8 weeks to get back to all preoperative activities depending on the type of surgery performed. The need for formal physical therapy after surgery will also depend on the specific surgery performed and the individual patient.

As with any surgical procedure, there are alternatives, risks and potential complications and these should all be discussed in detail with you before surgery. Some arthroscopic procedures such as ACL reconstruction of the knee and rotator cuff tendon or Bankart repair of the shoulder are more comprehensive and involve more extensive rehabilitation. To see details of procedures in this category please click on [Reconstructive Arthroscopy](#) on the Patient Education page of our website.