

Orthopaedic Referral Guidelines

Tygerberg Hospital 2013

Arthroplasty Unit

Total hip and knee joint replacement

The condition requiring hip and knee joint replacement is Osteoarthritis.

Also used in Rheumatoid Arthritis, other inflammatory conditions, Avascular Necrosis, CDH and Post-traumatic arthritis.

The indications for joint replacement in the hip and knee are persistent pain, limited ambulation and night pain, despite full conservative therapy.

Joint replacement is a very successful operation and 90 to 95% of joint replacements will still be in place and functioning well at ten to fifteen years. A small number of patients experience complications which can be devastating and for this reason patients should not be considered for joint replacement until their condition has become chronic and conservative methods have failed.

Primary treatment:

- Weight reduction.
- NSAIDs and Paracetamol-based analgesics
- Activity modification.
- Walking aid (contralateral hand).

Refer when:

- Pre-existing medical problems have been optimised.
- Conservative measures have failed.