

Osteochondritis Dissecans

What is it?

Loose bodies in the joint, occurs when a fragment of bone adjacent to the articular surface of a joint is deprived of its blood supply, leading to avascular necrosis. Causes cartilage to become brittle and pieces break off. Can be found in different joints in the body, but most common in the knee.

What causes it?

Loss of blood supply to the end of the bone and its attached cartilage. Impact to joint causing tearing or breaking of cartilage. Repetitive friction leading to the cartilage becoming brittle and breaking away.

Symptoms

Aching, diffuse pain with swelling, especially during activity. Stiffness with rest. Clicking or weakness in the joint. Momentary locking if the bony fragment has displaced and is free floating in the joint.

Top Tips

Stop activities causing irritation. Use ice packs and anti-inflammatories to manage the pain.

How to treat it?

Rest and referral to medical professional. Immobilisation. Anti-inflammatories. Positive diagnosis with a radiograph.



Rehab & Prevention

Strengthening muscles around affected joint. Limiting time spent doing repetitive movement with the joint. Gradually build up to normal activity.

Definitions

Articular Surface of a Joint – the surface of a bone which makes direct contact with another skeletal structure (eg bone or cartilage) as part of the joint

Avascular Necrosis – death of bone tissue due to lack of blood supply

Cartilage – firm, flexible connective tissue found in articulating surfaces of joints

Diffuse Pain – widespread pain, not confined to one specific point

Associated Conditions

- Medial Collateral Ligament Sprain (MCL)
- Anterior Cruciate Ligament Sprain (ACL)
- Meniscus Tear
- Bursitis
- Knee (synovial) Plica
- Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome
- Patellar Tendinitis (Jumper's Knee)
- Chondromalacia Patellae (Runner's Knee)
- Subluxing or Dislocating Knee Cap

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References: The Anatomy of Sports Injuries by Brad Walker, Anatomy & Physiology by Louise Tucker and Google.com