



### **Osteochondritis Dissecans**

**Definition:** Osteochondritis dissecans is a condition in which a loose piece of bone and cartilage become dislodged from its origination due to a lack of blood supply. These bony fragments usually appear within a joint space between two connecting bones.

**Common Terms:** This is sometimes referred to as having 'joint mice' or a 'loose body' within a joint. OCD

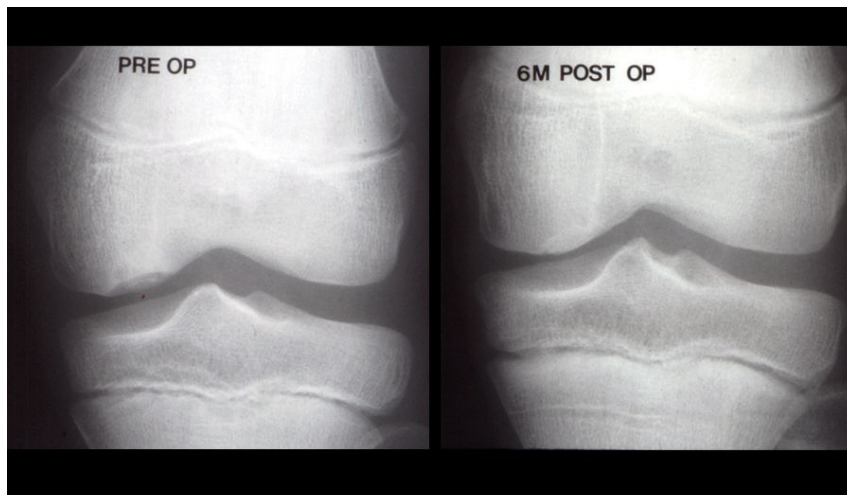
**Typical Mechanism of Injury:** This condition can occur from progressive degeneration of joint structures. It may also be caused by trauma in which a piece of bone or cartilage breaks free and enters into the joint space.

**Common Signs and Symptoms:** With this condition, the bony fragment may be stable in the joint space or can be free floating in which pain is noted; usually more severe around the joint line. A decrease in range of motion exists as well as joint dysfunction due to joint 'locking' with movement. Swelling may be present and the patient may present the joint in a pain-free position.

**Common Treatment:** If the loose body is stable within a joint then rest is the best initial treatment for the joint. However, if a person wants to continue with activities that require a great deal of range of motion, a protective brace may be helpful. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication should also be taken as needed to reduce pain and inflammation within the joint. In cases where the loose body is unstable, surgery may be indicated to remove or stabilize the loose body. After surgery proper rehabilitation should be performed in order to restore strength and range of motion.

**Prevention:** Although there is no way to directly prevent this condition, it is essential to be fully informed. With this knowledge about this condition one can seek medical attention to decrease chances of further advancements in this condition.

**Expectations:** With time this condition will eventually prohibit the patient's ability to produce forceful contractions of the muscles above and below the joint. If treatment is followed consistently, the patient should not have trouble enduring in regular activities. However if there are activities that cause pain or repetitive joint 'locking' the patient should avoid those activities.



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