

STEVEN CHUDIK MD

SHOULDER, KNEE & SPORTS MEDICINE

**Cartilage Sparing Repair of
Osteochondritis Dissecans (OCD) in the Elbow**

Indications

Osteochondritis dissecans (OCD) is a localized injury or condition affecting the bone just below the cartilage surface of a joint. OCD is often associated with repetitive trauma and sports. In OCD, the involved bone just below the joint surface fails and fractures from repetitive stress or from interruption of its local blood supply. Eventually, the overlying cartilage, not properly supported by the affected bone, can separate and an osteochondral fragment of bone and cartilage can break loose resulting in a hole in the joint surface and a loose body that can catch and cause painful mechanical symptoms. The resulting hole and irregularity of the joint surface will accelerate the wear and tear of the cartilage surface and arthritis of the knee joint. If the OCD lesion is stable (not loose) and the patient is still growing, conservative treatment of rest sometimes can allow it to heal. However, when the OCD lesion is more mature and has separated from the rest of the bone, surgical repair of the OCD may be necessary. If the cartilage surface is still intact over the OCD, a cartilage preserving approach from behind the OCD lesion can debride any intervening soft-tissue, “break –up” sclerotic non-healing bone, bone graft defects, apply fixation to stabilize the OCD fragment, and stimulate the OCD to heal.



OCD lesion on X-Ray

Contraindications to Surgery

- Infection in the elbow
- Inability or unwillingness to complete the postoperative program of limiting activity after surgery and to complete the necessary rehabilitation



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Surgical Risks and Complications

- Wound infection
- Bleeding or injury to blood vessels
- Injury to nerves (numbness, weakness, etc.)
- Non-union (non-healing) of the OCD fragment (in repair situations)
- Shoulder stiffness
- Arthritis

Hospitalization and Anesthesia

- Outpatient surgery (you go home the same day)
- General anesthesia with interscalen block (numbing medicine injected around the nerves to the arm)

General Surgical Technique

Dr. Chudik evaluates and treats OCDs arthroscopically through small limited incisions and specialized instruments of his own design with the use of an arthroscope (small camera). He approaches and localizes the OCD from behind to preserve the intact cartilage surface rather than drilling through it. After identifying the OCD, he creates a tunnel to the damaged bone behind the cartilage of the joint and harvests healthy bone graft in the process. Then he breaks up the nonhealing bone, removes fibrous scar tissue in the defect, and then fills the defect with new bone graft to heal and provide support to the overlying cartilage of the joint surface.

Preoperative Instructions

- Discontinue birth control pills
- Stop blood thinners such as aspirin, Coumadin[®], Lovenox[®], Xarelto[®] according to the prescribing doctor's directions
- Stop anti-inflammatory medicines such as ibuprofen, Advil[®], Motrin[®], Naprosyn[®], Alleve[®], etc.)
- Stop nutritional supplements and drinks like Vitamin C, ginseng, ginkgo biloba, etc.
- Stop smoking for surgery and during the first six weeks postoperatively to allow proper tissue healing

Do not eat or drink anything from midnight, the evening before surgery



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Postoperative Course

- Sling for up to six weeks
- Return to school/sedentary work in less than one week
- Physical therapy to restore motion and strength for up to four to six months.
- After the elbow is healed and upper extremity is fully rehabilitated, **Dr. Chudik provides an interval throwing program** to gradually return the overhead athlete back to activity.

Return to Activity

- Return to gentle, daily activities about six to eight weeks after surgery
- Return to sports at the four to six months after surgery depending on sport and position

Scheduling Surgery

Contact Dr. Chudik's surgery scheduler at 630-324-0402 or contactus@chudikmd.com to:

- Schedule the date and location of surgery (the hospital will call the day before with the confirmed arrival time)
- Schedule a pre-operative appointment
- Schedule a post-operative appointment for ten to 14 days after surgery to remove sutures and review post-operative instructions

Notify My Office if Symptoms Worsen

