

# Osteochondral allograft transplantation effective for treating knee cartilage injuries

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For athletes and highly active patients who sustain cartilage injuries to their knee, an osteochondral allograft transplantation can be a successful treatment option, according to research presented today at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine's (AOSSM) Annual Meeting in Colorado Springs, CO. The study showed these patients were consistently able to return to sport or recreational activities after the surgery, though frequently at a lower activity level.

"We examined the success of osteochondral allograft (OCA) transplantation in 149 knees, and found 113, or 76% of those treated with the surgery, had returned to activity at an average follow-up of 6 years," commented William Bugbee, MD, lead author from the Scripps Clinic in La Jolla, CA. "Patients who are highly active can be discouraged by these types of injuries, so we are happy to see the success of this treatment option."

An OCA involves transplantation of donated osteochondral tissue to a defect in the recipient patient's knee joint. In this study, the average age of the subjects was 31 years old, with 59% being male. While the study showed positive statistics relating to general return to activity, only 28% returned at the same level pre-injury, and 48% returned to one or more but not all of the same sports and activities.

"We also saw an overall 90% survivorship of the transplanted grafts at a 6-year follow-up," noted Bugbee. "This presents further evidence that the procedure, especially in those individuals who are highly active, can

be positive for recovery and future athletic goals."

This study adds to previous research which shows long-term functional improvement in knees after OCA [transplant](#).

Provided by American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine

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