

# Study examines care received by patients with knee osteoarthritis

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New research reveals that only a minority of U.S. Medicare beneficiaries with knee osteoarthritis in 2005-2010 used non-surgical care such as

physical therapy and knee injections, and few were treated by rheumatologists, physiatrists, or pain specialists. The study, which is published in *Arthritis & Rheumatology*, also found that non-surgical care was more common in regions with low rates of knee replacement surgery.

It will be important to examine whether the use of conservative therapies was limited by capacity constraints or underappreciation of their role in the treatment of [knee osteoarthritis](#).

"In addition to its low use overall, conservative care was less commonly used in regions of the country with high rates of knee replacements, suggesting that surgery may more often be substituted for conservative care in these regions," said study author Michael Ward, MD, MPH, of the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases.

**More information:** Michael M. Ward, Osteoarthritis care and risk of total knee arthroplasty among medicare beneficiaries, *Arthritis & Rheumatology* (2021). [DOI: 10.1002/art.41878](https://doi.org/10.1002/art.41878)

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