

Physical therapy noninferior to arthroscopic surgery for meniscal tear

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Exercise-based physical therapy is noninferior to arthroscopic partial

meniscectomy for patient-reported knee function at five years among patients with a degenerative meniscal tear, according to a study published online July 8 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Julia C.A. Noorduyn, from OLVG Amsterdam, and colleagues compared the five-year effectiveness of arthroscopic partial meniscectomy and [exercise](#)-based physical therapy in 321 patients aged 45 to 70 years with a degenerative meniscal tear. Participants were randomly assigned to arthroscopic partial meniscectomy or 16 sessions of exercise-based physical therapy; 87.1 percent completed the five-year follow-up (mean follow-up, 61.8 months).

The researchers found that mean improvement was 29.6 and 25.1 points on the International Knee Documentation Committee Subjective Knee Form in the [surgery](#) and physical therapy groups, respectively, from baseline to follow-up. There was a 3.5-point crude between-group difference (95 percent confidence interval, 0.7 to 6.3 [points](#); P

"Findings from this trial further support the recommendation that exercise-based [physical therapy](#) should be the preferred treatment over surgery for degenerative meniscal tear," the authors write.

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