

## **Frequency of Articular Cartilage Lesions of the Knee. A Prospective Arthroscopic Study**

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**Introduction.** Traumatic articular injuries heal poorly and may lead to development of osteoarthritis in young age. This study estimates the numbers of patients who may benefit from one of the new surgical methods of cartilage repair.

**Material and method.** Prospectively successive patients undergoing knee arthroscopy during a six months period at three collaborating hospitals were evaluated according to the International Cartilage Repair Society (ICRS) knee form. The material consists of 993 consecutive knee arthroscopies in patients with median age of 35 years.

**Results.** Preoperative radiographs demonstrated degenerative changes in 13 % of the knees. Cartilage pathology was found in 66 % and a localized cartilage defect comprised 20 % of the knees. A localized full thickness cartilage lesion was observed in 11 % of the knees. Of the focal full thickness lesions 55 % (6 % of all knees) had a size above 2 cm<sup>2</sup>.

**Conclusion.** About 11 % of all knee arthroscopies show cartilage defects that may be suitable for cartilage surgical procedures.