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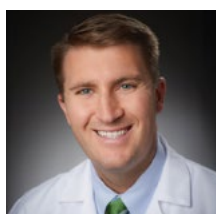
—Dr. Horn



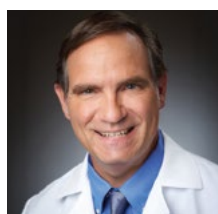
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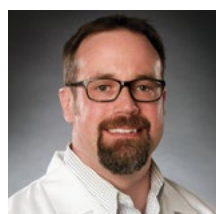
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Does Your Knee Need an Upgrade?

Top five signs it's time for total knee replacement surgery

Does your knee snap, crackle and pop more than your breakfast cereal? Have everyday activities started to feel like endurance events? Does your knee pain control your day's agenda more than you do?

If OTC pain medication, physical therapy and cortisone shots have stopped relieving your knee pain, maybe it's time to talk to the experts at Witham Orthopedics and Sports Medicine about knee replacement surgery.

"When the diagnosis is arthritis, we try non-operative options first. When you've exhausted those non-operative options, that's when you begin discussing surgery," says Terrance Devlin, M.D. Dr. Devlin is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon at Witham Orthopedic Associates, Lebanon.

What is Knee Replacement Surgery?

During knee replacement surgery, your orthopedic surgeon replaces damaged or deteriorated portions of your knee joint with new, artificial parts. More than 700,000 total knee replacement surgeries are performed every year, according to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS).

For many people, the procedure:

- Reduces pain
- Increases mobility
- Improves their quality of life

There is no "right" time to have knee replacement surgery. Although the surgery is more common in older adults, people of all ages can have knee replacement surgery. The decision to proceed with the procedure should be made in collaboration with your healthcare team, based on:

- Your pain level and its effect on your daily life



- Your health history
- Your health goals and concerns

Timing is Everything

Total knee replacement surgery is a safe, effective treatment option. However, like any surgery, the decision to have the procedure should not be taken lightly. Here are the top five signs it's time to consider the benefits of total knee replacement surgery.

1. Persistent, Severe Knee Pain

Constant, worsening pain that doesn't improve with medication or physical therapy is one of the most common signs you need a knee replacement. Often, the pain is present even when you're resting or doing minimal activities.

When your knee pain interferes with your daily routine and interrupts your sleep, it's time to schedule a visit with your physician to discuss whether knee replacement surgery is for you.

"In orthopedic surgery, what we are trying to do, probably more than any other specialty, is minimize pain and restore mobility," says Dr. Devlin.

2. Difficulty Performing Everyday Activities

Severe knee pain and stiffness can make even the most mundane activity

seem like a major production. If taking a short walk, climbing stairs or getting up from your favorite chair are all painful experiences, it could be a sign that your knee joint isn't functioning correctly.

"My philosophy on total joint replacement is that the purpose of the procedure is mobility. Mobility is important for an active lifestyle, and so the quicker the patient can get up and get moving and increase their range of motion and their strength, the quicker they can get back to the lifestyle that they desire," says Dr. Devlin.

3. Persistent Swelling and Inflammation

Swelling and inflammation that don't go away with rest and treatment can be a sign of joint damage. Talk to your doctor about treatment options if your knee joints begin to show increased signs of wear and tear.

4. Decreased Function and Mobility

If the condition of your knee joint continues to worsen, it can reduce your ability to fully bend or straighten your knee. You may have trouble balancing and your knee will "give out" with little or no warning. Reduced function often makes it more chal-

lenging to stay active, maintain muscle strength and enjoy everyday life. In many cases, knee replacement surgery not only offers a dramatic reduction in your pain but also increases your ability to go about your day.

5. Your Doctor Recommends Surgery

Knee replacement surgery is usually recommended when other treatment options have not provided the needed relief from knee pain. If you've tried pain medication, injections, physical therapy, braces and supportive devices and none have given you the results you're looking for, it could mean your knee joint has reached the stage where knee replacement is the best option.

Ready to take the next step?

If knee pain is limiting your mobility and keeping you from doing the things you love, don't wait to explore your options. The orthopedic specialists at Witham Orthopedics and Sports Medicine will evaluate and diagnose the source of your knee pain, walk you through the available treatment options and help you determine the care plan that best fits your goals, lifestyle and needs.

Featured Expert

Terrance Devlin, M.D. is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon with Witham Orthopedic Associates in Lebanon, Indiana. He specializes in both non-surgical and surgical treatment options and takes a patient-centered approach to care that results in reduced pain, restored mobility and faster return to the activities you enjoy.





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How to Choose an Orthopedic Surgeon

Your Guide to Making the Right Decision for Your Orthopedic Care

Choosing an orthopedic surgeon is an important decision that directly affects your recovery, quality of life and overall health. Whether you are facing a sports injury, dealing with chronic joint pain or need orthopedic surgery, knowing how to identify a qualified, experienced surgeon you can trust helps ensure you receive the best possible care.

“At Witham Orthopedics, your success is paramount, and we will be with you every step of the way” said Conor J. Dwyer, M.D. “You will be seeing your surgeon at each and every postoperative appointment to make sure you get the best possible outcome after your surgery.”

Here’s how to approach the process with confidence.

Ask Your Doctor

Ask your primary care physician for a referral to an orthopedic specialist. Your doctor knows your personal health history and can recommend surgeons they know and trust. It’s often helpful to request more than one name. Having more choices gives you options if a particular surgeon isn’t accepting new patients, doesn’t accept your insurance or has long wait times.

These questions will get you started:

- Are you taking new patients?
- Do you accept my insurance?
- What are your office hours?
- Where are your offices located? Do you have more than one location?
- What is the average wait time to get an appointment?
- How many doctors are in the practice? Who will see me if you’re not available?
- Where will I have tests and procedures done?

Get Recommendations from Family and Friends

Personal recommendations from friends, family members or colleagues who have had similar orthopedic issues can also be valuable. Ask about the care they received, the outcome and how well the surgeon communicated during treatment.

Questions to ask include:

- Were you involved in the care and decision-making process?
- How well did the doctor explain things?
- Are the nurses and support staff responsive and helpful?
- Was it easy to schedule an appointment? How long did it take to be seen?
- Were you satisfied with your care? Why or why not?

Check Experience and Expertise

Experience matters, especially when it comes to complex procedures. Research shows that the more times a surgeon performs a procedure, the better the outcome tends to be. Orthopedic surgeons typically undergo extensive training that includes medical school, a multi-year residency in orthopedic surgery and board certification. Some also complete additional fellowship training to further fine-tune their skills.

Orthopedic surgeons who are board-certified have completed additional training after medical school. They have also passed a detailed examination in their specialty area. You can verify board certification through the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery (ABOS).

Fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeons have undergone even more specialized training focused on their

specialty area. During their fellowship, they work closely with other experts, gaining advanced, hands-on experience and learning the most effective techniques.

Review the credentials of the orthopedic specialists you’re considering, including their training and whether they’re board-certified or fellowship-trained. Both indicate advanced expertise in their specialty area.

Asking these questions can help you make an informed decision:

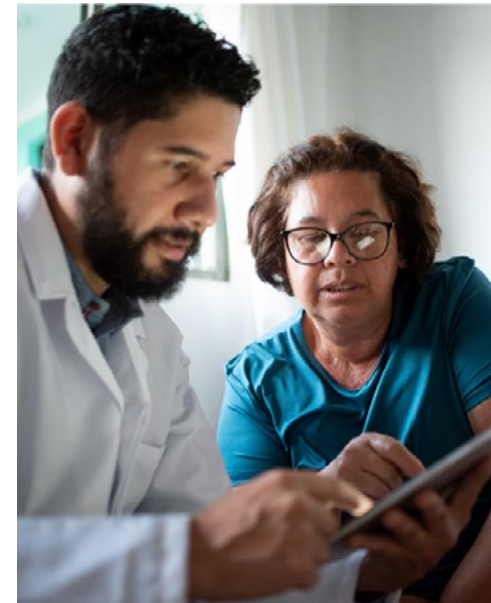
- How long have you been practicing orthopedics?
- How much experience do you have treating my condition?
- How many orthopedic procedures do you perform every year?
- What are your rates for infection and readmission after orthopedic surgery?
- Are you involved in any research, clinical trials or innovative treatment options?
- How do you feel about involving my family in my care?
- Can I call or email your office if I have questions?

Get Comfortable

Choose an orthopedic surgeon you feel comfortable talking with – after all, you are literally putting your health in their hands. A doctor who listens to your concerns, explains your diagnosis clearly and encourages you to ask questions is vital to your health and well-being.

Schedule a consultation with your top contender to see if they’re a good fit. After you meet, if you can say “Yes” to the following questions, you may have just added a new member to your healthcare team. If you answer “No,” you may want to keep looking for a better match for your needs.

Ask yourself:

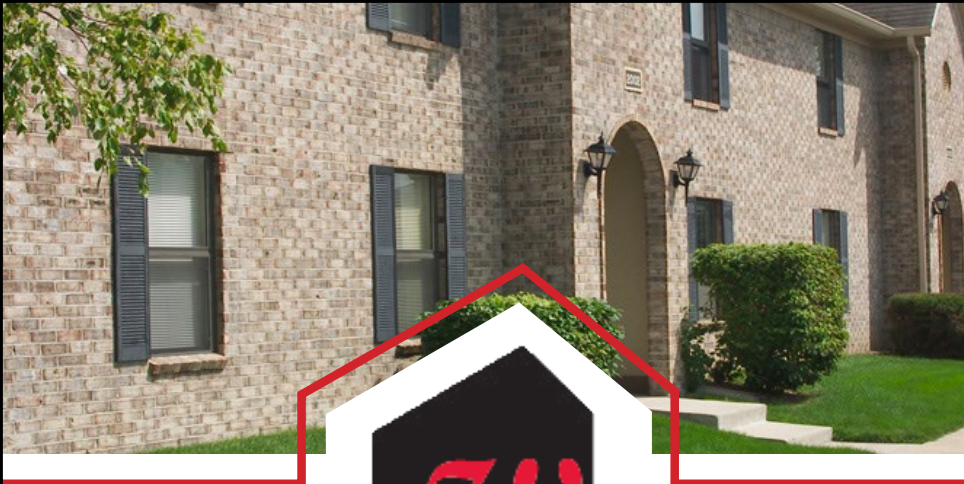


- Was the office easy to get to?
- Was the office staff friendly and helpful?
- Did the surgeon take time to answer my questions?
- Were their explanations easy to understand?
- Did I feel heard and respected?
- Was I given all the information I need to make educated decisions about my orthopedic care?

Take the Next Step with Confidence

If you’re looking for an orthopedic team that truly listens and puts your goals first, Witham Orthopedics and Sports Medicine is here for you. Schedule a consultation to receive a clear diagnosis and explore your treatment options. Together, we’ll create a personalized care plan focused on relieving pain, restoring mobility and helping you get back to the life you love.





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Safety & Smarts Necessary When Exercising With Arthritis

Physical activity is a vital component of a healthy lifestyle. While the recommendations for exercise may vary for each individual, general guidelines from public health agencies typically suggest most people should get around 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise per day.

People with arthritis may be hesitant to head to the gym or engage in home workouts because the instinct to rest is strong when joints feel stiff or painful. However, health care advocates note that movement is one of the most effective treatments for arthritis.

Recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says arthritis remains a leading cause of disability in 2026. Roughly one in

four adults in the United States have been diagnosed with some form of arthritis. The Arthritis Foundation says exercise is not just a lifestyle choice, but an essential component of joint health. People who engage in physical activity report a 40 percent reduction in pain on average. Here is a prescription for safely navigating physical activity while managing arthritis.

- **Emphasize exercise that improves flexibility.** The Better Health Channel says people with arthritis should focus on exercises that reduce stiffness and keep joints moving through their full range-of-motion. Examples include gentle neck rotations, shoulder rolls and finger stretches daily, especially in the morning during flare-ups.

- **Incorporate low-impact aerobic movements.** Cardiovascular exercises improve heart health and help with weight management, which is essential for people with arthritis. The Arthritis Foundation says losing just one pound of body weight can remove four pounds of pressure from the knees. Walking, cycling and water exercises are low-impact ways to get the cardio a body needs, says the Mayo Clinic.

- **Make resistance training part of your routine.** Building strong muscles can help protect the joints by acting as shock absorbers. People can use bodyweight exercises like chair squats, resistance bands or light dumbbells to build muscle. The Arthritis Foundation recommends focusing on the muscles surrounding

joints experiencing the most pain, such as quadriceps for knee arthritis or abdominals to protect the hips and spine.

- **Assess pain.** Experts suggest using something called the “two-hour rule” to determine if exercise added to or diminished arthritis pain. If joint pain is higher two hours after exercising, then it’s important to reduce the duration or intensity of exercise the next time. During a flare-up, do not stop moving entirely, but shift to gentle range-of-motion stretching only, suggests the Mayo Clinic.

Exercise can remain a key component of daily life, even for those with arthritis.

Safe Way Seniors Can Lose Weight

The prevalence of obesity among adults 60 and older is significant. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 39 percent of adults 60 and over met the criteria for obesity over a two-year period between August 2021 and August 2023.

The National Council on Aging notes the importance of maintaining a healthy weight as you age. Seniors who qualify as obese, which occurs when a person's body accumulates and stores excessive amounts of body fat, carry a higher risk of chronic diseases like type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and certain types of cancer. The NCOA also notes that excess body weight puts a strain on the joints, increasing the risk for osteoarthritis and making daily movements more difficult. People with obesity also are more likely to develop asthma and sleep apnea.

Seniors diagnosed with obesity are urged to seek safe and healthy ways to lose weight. Fad diets and other means to quick weight loss can be dangerous, but the NCOA notes simple lifestyle changes and healthy habits can help seniors safely lose weight.

- **Consume nutrient-dense foods.**

Lean proteins, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables offer plenty of vitamins, minerals and fiber but tend to be low in calories. That makes them ideal options for people looking to lose weight, as they contribute to feelings of fullness without consuming a lot of calories.

- **Incorporate physical activity into your daily routine.** Exercise can pose problems for older adults who qualify as obese. The joint issues that can affect older adults with obesity can make traditional exercise regimens that incorporate strength train-

ing and moderate to vigorous aerobic activity very difficult, and maybe even dangerous. But the NCOA notes that exercise need not be intense to be effective. Walking is a great physical activity for older adults. Swimming also is excellent, as it provides a full-body workout that's easy on the joints. Seniors are urged to speak with their physicians about physical activities they can handle.

- **Don't sleep on sleep.** Sleep can be an effective ally for seniors looking to lose weight. The NCOA notes that seven to nine hours of sleep per

night helps support a healthy metabolism and regulate hunger. Seniors who have trouble falling asleep at night can try various strategies, from avoiding caffeine from the afternoon on to avoiding screens after dinner, to prepare their bodies to get better rest at night.

- **Work to combat stress.** The NCOA reports that stress is a contributor to weight gain. And stress and disorders linked to it are perhaps more common among adults 60 and over than people realize. In fact, according to the Anxiety and

Depression Association of America, anxiety disorders, which are a notable source of ongoing stress, are the most widespread mental health condition among older adults. Sufficient sleep, meditation and deep breathing exercises can help seniors combat stress, and that in turn may help older adults avoid excess weight gain.

Obesity is a problem among older adults. Finding safe ways to lose weight can have a profound effect on seniors' short- and long-term health.



Daily Means to Maintaining Oral Health

A bright and healthy smile offers more than cosmetic benefits. When individuals prioritize oral hygiene, they're also protecting their overall health and laying an important piece of a foundation that can support a long and healthy life.

The Mayo Clinic notes that oral health can be a contributing factor to various conditions, including cardiovascular disease and an infection of the inner lining of the heart known as endocarditis. By prioritizing oral health, individuals not only reap outward benefits like a bright smile they can be proud of, but also benefit internally in ways that are no less significant. Perhaps the best thing about oral health is how simple it can be to maintain. Indeed, some daily dental habits can help people protect their oral health, and thus their overall health, for years and years to come.

- **Brush twice per day (at least).**

Brushing twice a day for two minutes each time has been the go-to brushing advice for some time. The Oral Health Foundation notes that brushing twice daily with fluoride toothpaste is the most effective means to safeguarding oral health.

- **Consider brushing before breakfast.** Individuals who eat breakfast at home might want to brush before breakfast or wait to brush for 30 minutes after they finish eating. The OHF notes that brushing before breakfast coats the teeth with fluoride, which can form a protective layer against acids found in food and drinks. Brushing immediately after exposure to acidic items like fruit and coffee can wear down enamel.



If you prefer to brush after eating breakfast, wait at least 30 minutes before reaching for your toothbrush.

- **Gently use a toothbrush with soft bristles.** Soft brushes feature less densely packed bristles, which makes it easier for the bristles to bend during brushing. That's gentler on the teeth and gums. The Cleveland Clinic recommends changing a toothbrush every three to four months, but more frequent changing may be necessary if the brush becomes damaged. In such instances, replace the brush immediately. When brush-

ing, do so gently to avoid aggravating the gums. Heavy brushing can lead to a receding gumline, which can expose the roots and lead to increased oral sensitivity.

- **Floss daily.** The Mayo Clinic urges individuals to clean between their teeth each day. Traditional floss, floss picks, a water flosser, and other products help to remove plaque and trapped food particles from between the teeth that a toothbrush cannot reach. If such particles remain between the teeth, people may be at elevated risk for cavities, gum disease

and/or bad breath.

- **Avoid sugary foods and beverages.** The World Health Organization notes that consumption of free sugars is a major risk factor for tooth decay and cavities. Consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages like sodas and foods that are high in sugars should be greatly limited, if not avoided entirely.

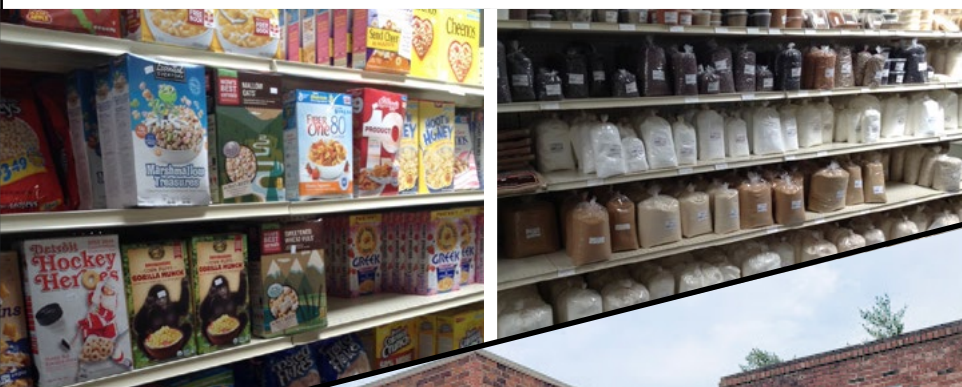
Some simple daily steps can help people protect their oral health over the long haul.

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Warning Signs of IBS

Issues that affect the digestive system can be uniquely unpleasant. When a person's digestive system is not functioning optimally, he or she may struggle to eat the foods they like and deal with physical and emotional stress.

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a group of disorders that affect the digestive system. The International Foundation For Gastrointestinal Disorder estimates that between 5 and 10 percent of the global population has IBS. Most of those people are under the age of 50. Despite the prevalence of IBS, the IFFGD notes treatments are available that can help people manage symptoms. Recognition of those symptoms as indicators of IBS can be the first step on the road to living a better, fuller life.

The IFFGD notes that symptoms of IBS vary and are sometimes contradictory. For example, diarrhea, a condition which causes frequent bowel movements, can alternate with constipation, which is marked by difficulty emptying the bowels. But both are potential warning signs of IBS. Health care professionals may classify IBS as IBS-C (IBS with constipation), IBS-D (IBS with diarrhea) or IBS-M (IBS with mixed bowel habits) in an effort to help people better understand their condition. The Cleveland Clinic notes that some additional warning signs of IBS include:

- Abdominal pain or cramps that are typically related to the urge to have a bowel movement



- Excess gas and bloating
- Mucus in the stool that may produce a stool with a whitish tint
- Feeling as though you're incapable of emptying your bowels, even after a bowel movement

Reporting symptoms is important, and that's a lesson lost on many people. While IBS cannot be cured, treatment can help manage symptoms. But 2,000 participants in a recent survey from the IFFGD acknowledged their IBS was not diagnosed for an average of 6.6 years after symptoms began. While some of those instances might be due to misdiagnosis by health care professionals, it's also possible that people with IBS are not reporting their symptoms. Doing so can alleviate the strain and stress of living with IBS.

Millions of people across the globe deal with IBS each day. More information about the condition, including treatment options, is available at aboutibs.org.



5 Ways Seniors Can Get Moving

People of all ages are encouraged to be physically active, and that includes seniors. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say seniors ages 65 and older should aim for at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity and at least two days a week of muscle-strengthening exercises. Although some people may be drawn to the gym, others with no such preference may need to identify other ways to incorporate more physical activity into their lives. Seniors can stay active in various ways by enjoying activities that get them up and moving. The following are five ideas to get started.

1. Play a sport. Pickleball and padel are the fastest-growing recreational sports among seniors. Pickleball blends tennis and badminton while padel blends tennis and squash. These activities combine challenging cardio workouts with a social component.

2. Go dancing. A recent meta-analysis found that group dancing enhances social interaction while providing moderate aerobic exercise. Dancing is fun and can get anyone to break a sweat, and it doesn't feel like exercise.

3. Join or start a walking club. Seniors can engage with other like-minded individuals by turning

their daily walks into something that offers companionship and exercise. An app like Charity Miles offers an additional layer of purpose to the activity, as it turns walks into fundraising opportunities.

4. Take up gardening. Gardening can be a thorough workout. The Royal Horticultural Society says gardening provides moderate-intensity, full-body exercise that burns approximately 165 to 300 calories every 30 to 60 minutes.

5. Consider aquatic endeavors. High-intensity interval training (HIIT) in the water is a new exercise trend that allows people to elevate their heart rates without placing

any extra strain on the joints. Water activities in general tend to be easy on the body but provide immense benefits for flexibility and gentle resistance. Everyday Health says HIIT in a pool can improve fitness capacity roughly as much as HIIT done on land.

Seniors have various options to stay active and keep moving. Many such activities are entertaining and social in nature, which can help seniors maintain a commitment to being physically active.

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