

# New Kneecap Replacement Offers Pain Relief

## *Spare total knee replacement*

For twenty years, Pat Pinning hobbled around on an arthritic right knee for which her doctors recommended a total knee replacement. “The pain was awful,” she recalls. “I could walk,

but I couldn’t get up out of chairs or go up and down stairs without terrible pain. I resorted to using a cane,” says the active 70 year old, who kept putting off surgery, wishing for another solution.

What Mrs. Pinning suffered from is called patello-femoral pain, the most common complaint of patients with knee problems. “The heavy

stresses we place on our knees through daily activity can have a dramatic effect on the knee cap,” says Dr. Stuart Winakur, a St. Joseph orthopaedic surgeon. “Athletes, including skiers, cyclists and runners, are especially prone to this type of pain, which is also called chondromalacia patella. It refers to the pain from damaged cartilage under the knee or knee cap,” he says.

Fortunately, Mrs. Pinning consulted Dr. Winakur for another opinion, and he gave her hope for a less invasive operation.

“Dr. Winakur did an x-ray and said that I didn’t need a

total knee replacement. He said my knee joint was still good,” recalls Mrs. Pinning, “and that if he ever found a way to do a successful knee cap replacement that he would start offering them.”

Before long, Dr. Winakur had good news for Pat. “He went to an orthopaedic conference and found a doctor who did knee cap replacements!” says Mrs. Pinning. “Dr. Winakur told me that he would start doing them, too!”

This new advanced technique can now provide the answer for patients with severe patello-femoral disease. “An artificial patello-

femoral replacement is a welcome choice for patients who used to be faced with complete removal of the kneecap,” explains Dr. Winakur.

“Years ago, the only treatment other than a total knee replacement was removal of the patella. Most orthopaedic surgeons tried to avoid the removal procedure in hopes that something better would be developed. When the rest of the knee is normal, a total knee replacement is not recommended. We always strive to maintain the healthy portions of the knee.

“With kneecap replacement, the diseased tissue of the patella and femur is replaced with a plastic and metal surface. This takes the place of the damaged knee cartilage,” he says.

Mrs. Pinning loves the results from her new kneecap. “When my knee bends, I don’t have crackling and pain. I have a range of motion of 130 degrees and I can be on my feet longer than

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Dr. Stuart Winakur,  
*orthopaedic surgeon,*  
*St. Joseph Medical Center*

before.” She is back to driving long distances, traveling and walking for pleasure with her friends.

She is one of many patients who have been freed from severe pain thanks to the new kneecap replacement. Dr. Winakur confirms, “Medical reports have shown good results with this surgery in patients that faced no other alternative but a lifetime of pain.”

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