

Groote Schuur Hospital Knee Clinic Referral Criteria

Knee Arthroplasty clinic

Services offered

Unicompartmental replacement or osteotomy is only considered if there is no sign of degeneration in the other compartment and in low BMI patients only. Smoking is a contraindication for osteotomies.

Total knee replacement is only considered for advanced degenerative changes of the knee confirmed radiologically, when the patient wants surgical intervention, and when conservative management strategies failed. Patient preferably over 50 years of age with walking distances of less than 500m, constant pain, rest and night pain, decreased activities of daily living and if independence is threatened. Peripheral circulation must be good. Risk factors: BMI of over 40, vascular insufficiencies

Inappropriate referral:

Patient does not want surgery or is unable to have surgery. Early to moderate disease. Patient without diagnosis – i.e. ‘knee pain’. Patient without X-rays.

Soft Tissue Knee clinic

Services:

This clinic provides surgical care for patients who want and would benefit from operations to treat soft tissue injuries and pathology of the knee. These operations are predominantly meniscal surgery, ligament surgery, cartilage surgery.

Meniscal injuries

Under 40 years of age with a definite history of injury and inability to continue activities, mechanical symptoms, -effusion, locking, giving way. The diagnosis must be supported by clinical and MRI findings and not settling with conservative measures.

Instability

Ligament ruptures—collateral or cruciate, with a definite history of injury with swelling and inability to continue play or activity with continuing instability. Ligament ruptures should be confirmed by clinical and MRI findings.

Patellofemoral pain

Only refer to orthopaedics if chondral defects or advanced degenerative changes proven by x-ray or MRI, or for **recurrent** patella dislocation problems.

Inappropriate Referral:

Patients with meniscal symptoms **over 40 years of age** Do not refer degenerative intra substance tears as this is early stage OA and will not be changed by surgery. Usually degenerative meniscal changes with or without tears will settle with time and conservative measures. Please refer to the general orthopaedic service for degenerative meniscal management. Please refer to Arthroplasty clinic for patients over 50 years of age.

Patella tendinopathy requires conservative management, not generally requiring referral to orthopaedics.

Acute patella dislocations

Sports Injury clinic

Services:

This is a fast track clinic for young athletes with ACUTE sports related soft tissue injuries who would benefit from surgical care.

Referral criteria are:

Sports related injury

Patient is younger than 45 years

No fracture on XRs

patient benefits from early surgical treatment.

Inappropriate referral:

If any of the referral criteria is not given.

should be managed conservatively and do not need to be seen at the soft tissue knee clinic, unless osteochondral defects are present or dislocations are recurrent.