

Women and Knee Replacement: The Facts (Gender Knee)

- **In the United States, more than 400,000 people get their knees replaced each year, and nearly two-thirds are women**
- **Women suffer from more knee pain and disability than men**

Now, more than ever, your surgeon can choose from a number of knee replacement implants to meet your individual needs. Among the knee systems available to your surgeon is the gender knee, which is designed to accommodate normal movement and meet your body's need for normal knee rotation.

Why is knee rotation important?

Many people believe that the knee joint acts as a hinge, which can only bend and straighten like a door. In reality, the knee is much more complex because the surfaces roll and glide against each other as the knee joint bends. For women, rotation is especially important, because women's knees rotate more than men's during deep knee bending. Rotation is important for activities such as walking, kneeling to garden, sitting while driving, exercising, climbing stairs, and playing with your children or grandchildren.

For more active patients, as well as those who may need the ability to deeply bend their knee for activities that are important to them, the gender knee may be a good option.

About your knee!

Your knee joint is composed of three bones: the end of your thighbone (femur), the top of your shinbone (tibia) and your kneecap (patella). These three bones are held together by tendons and ligaments and cushioned by

cartilage. If you're injured, or get an infection or arthritis, the cartilage can become damaged and deteriorate. Eventually, your knee bones can grind together, which is painful and your doctor might recommend knee replacement. Total knee replacement involves removing the portions of your bone that are damaged, and resurfacing your knee with metal and plastic implants.

Gender knee and the benefit to a woman!

Knee replacements have long been available in many different sizes, but pioneering research shows getting a good fit is not just about size, it's about the shape.

The gender knee offers the following advantages for women seeking joint replacement:

1. Thinner Profile

The bone in the front of a woman's knee is typically less prominent than in a man's. Traditional implants have a thickness in front that may end up making them feel "bulky," which may result in pain and a decrease in range of motion. The gender knee has a thinner profile to accommodate this anatomical difference between men and women.

2. More Natural Movement

The angle between the hip and the knee affects how the kneecap moves over the thighbone when the knee is in motion. Women have a distinct shape that frequently results in a different angle between the hip and the knee when compared to men. The gender knee accounts for this difference, allowing for more natural movement.

3. Contoured Shape

The gender knee has a contoured shape to more closely match the narrower anatomy of a woman's knee. This contouring provides for a more precise fit, and may prevent the implant from overhanging the bone and potentially pressing on or damaging surrounding ligaments or tendons.

Your surgeon will evaluate your mobility, as well as your rehabilitation goals, to determine if you are a good candidate for a gender knee.

The way a knee replacement will perform depends on your age, weight, activity level and other factors. There are potential risks, and recovery takes time. If you have conditions that limit rehabilitation you should consult your orthopedic surgeon. Only he can tell you if knee replacement is right for you.

If you would like more information on the gender knee, please call 703-664-7493. The Inova Joint Replacement Center at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital provides gender knee joint replacement.

