



Hip and knee patients have a new option: cartilage restoration

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Ammar Anbari, MD, will offer new procedures and techniques for patients in eastern Connecticut who have injuries or chronic problems with their joints.

Dr. Anbari has special training in the latest techniques of shoulder, elbow, hip and knee arthroscopy; ligament and tendon reconstruction and repair; and cartilage restoration. He also can treat shoulder problems completely arthroscopically instead of the traditional open procedures, and can treat arthritic shoulders with total shoulder or reverse total shoulder replacement.

One of the new procedures Dr. Anbari will offer is cartilage restoration, where cartilage can be repaired or reconstructed using donor tissue.

"We can do these cartilage restoration procedures for younger patients, rather than a total hip or knee replacement. This addresses people who don't have other options and suffer pain from a loss of cartilage," he said.

There are different procedures to replace cartilage, which include making small holes in bone to induce the formation of cartilage, using cartilage from another part of the body or from a donor. If a larger portion is missing, cartilage cells can be sent to a lab to be multiplied and in 6-8 weeks the patient is taken back to the operating room where a patch is harvested from the leg and used to cover the cartilage defect. The new cells are injected under the patch, and he said it has been shown the cells can adhere to the bone and recreate more cartilage cells.

Renee Zawacki, 35, Norwich, recently underwent an arthroscopic procedure in her knee, to fix a tear in her knee cartilage.

She said she was not sure how the injury occurred, but since a trip in July it had



Dr. Ammar Anbari, a new orthopedic surgeon on the Backus Medical Staff, performs a knee surgery. In addition to his numerous surgical specialties, he serves as the team physician for the WNBA's Connecticut Sun.

gotten progressively worse, and was swollen and achy. Sometimes she would have shooting pains, or pain so bad she had to sit down.

Four days after the surgery, Mrs. Zawacki said she had no pain in her knee. "For the first couple days it was painful, but it was a healing pain," she said. She had not yet found out whether physical therapy would be needed.

"I was absolutely satisfied with Dr. Anbari, I had an MRI and then the surgery was scheduled for about a week later, so it was very quick," she said. "Everyone at Same Day Surgery was excellent."

Dr. Anbari joined the Norwich Orthopedic Group and the Backus Hospital Medical Staff in August. He graduated from Temple University School of Medicine in Philadelphia, where he received the prestigious John W. Lachman Award in Orthopaedic Surgery. He completed a fellowship in sports medicine and cartilage restoration at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago.