

LET'S DISCUSS *Series*

Joint Preservation of the Knee

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INTRODUCTION

Articular cartilage injuries in the knee account for approximately 200,000 surgical procedures per year in the United States.¹ Although the natural history of cartilage lesions is not known exactly, it is thought that, left untreated, these lesions will enlarge over time and result in the development of osteoarthritis. Although many surgical techniques exist to manage symptomatic full-thickness articular cartilage injuries, including microfracture (traditional and enhanced), autologous chondrocyte implantation (ACI), juvenile particulated chondral allograft, osteochondral allograft and osteochondral autograft transfer, the latter two techniques transfer an intact osteochondral unit to treat not only the chondral injury with hyaline cartilage but also potential underlying bone pathology by promoting bone-to-bone healing and rapid incorporation of the plug.