

About Avascular Necrosis (AVN) of the Knee (also called Osteonecrosis)

This condition occurs when a bone's normal blood supply is disrupted. The affected bone cells die, and the dead bone weakens and may begin to fracture and collapse, leading to arthritis. It most commonly affects women over the age of 60.

CAUSES

The condition is most often caused by injury, such as a break or dislocation. It can also develop as a result of heavy alcohol use, cancer treatments, prolonged use of corticosteroids, or by diseases such as Lupus or clotting disorders.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms include severe pain, swelling, locking, clicking, popping, and loss of mobility in the knee joint. Pain may be most noticeable during physical activity, but eventually the joint may hurt even when at rest.

TREATMENT

Treatment options include medications, a brace, exercises, and modification of activities that cause pain. In severe cases, surgery may be needed. Surgical options include arthroscopic debridement, core decompression, bone reshaping, osteotomy, bone grafting, or joint replacement (arthroplasty).



