

## **OSTEOCHONDRAL DEFECTS OF THE KNEE: AUTOLOGOUS CHONDROCYTE IMPLANTATION ALLOWS RETURN TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORTS**

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**PURPOSE:** We determined whether autologous chondrocyte implantation (ACI) in patients with osteochondral defects (OCD) of the knee resulted in patients returning to high levels of work and physical activities. **METHODS:** 133 patients from January 2001 to December 2002 underwent ACI. A telephone and postal questionnaire was conducted to ascertain a detailed occupational and leisure activity profile in this cohort. For each job held we asked whether an average working day had involved any of ten specified physical activities. For each sport that had been played 5 times a year, we asked the age the sporting activities had began and whether they were able to return to these sports after surgery. **RESULTS:** 109 patients responded to the questionnaire. There were 59 females and 50 males. Sports injuries accounted for 63% of the traumatic OCDs of the knee. The mean age at the time of operation was 34.5 (range 14 to 49). 42% of patients had to make some form of modification to their work. 47% of patients were able to return to at least one of the sports they played pre-injury. The mean number of sports played pre-injury was 2.5 and following surgery was 1.6. The mean time at which they could commence walking, swimming and cycling as a form of exercise was 3.3, 3.9, and 4.2 weeks respectively. **CONCLUSION:** Patients rehabilitate quickly following Autologous Chondrocyte Implantation and return to work and sport in almost all cases but with fewer sporting activities.