

Ugandan player's cartilage repaired

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PUNE: The city has become well-known for medical tourism. Now cell culture technology and tissue engineering too is emerging as a much sought-after treatments by Indian and foreign nationals, especially sportspersons.

Dr Sachin Tapasvi, a consultant on arthritis, sports medicine with the Oyster and Pearl Hospital, recently performed a Autologous Cartilage Implantation Procedure, on Ugandan National Football Team player Joseph Owino, who is here for the second stage of the operation.

Owino was ruled out for the rest of the season due to a cartilage defect in his knee and was referred to Dr Tapasvi through his coach in Uganda. This technology is useful, in both sports as well as non-sports related trauma.

“Earlier the options available involved sewing up the cartilage tear, or removing off the cartilage altogether, which risked exposure of bones in the knee later resulting in osteoarthritis,” said Tapasvi.

The cost of this treatment, including cell culture and operations, is around Rs 2.5 lakh. Around 200 operations of this kind have been performed in India, a majority in Mumbai. “In Pune, 15 such operations have been performed with around 70 per cent being non-sports trauma and the results have been positive,” said Tapasvi.

“In case of non-sports patients, they can get back to work in around a month- and-a-half. To play sports, it will take about eight-nine months,” he added.

Speaking about his surgery, Owino said, “The treatment and care has been very good. I find the city very interesting too. I plan to come back again, when I'm fully fit.”

ARTIFICIAL REGENERATION OF CELLS

In the first part of the surgery performed on Joseph Owino, a cartilage tissue was extracted from the knee. The tissue was put through a process in the RMS Regrow: Cell Processing Centre in Lonavla. The process involved regenerating cells artificially using the extracted tissue. Ownio, a football player, is here for the second stage of the operaton.