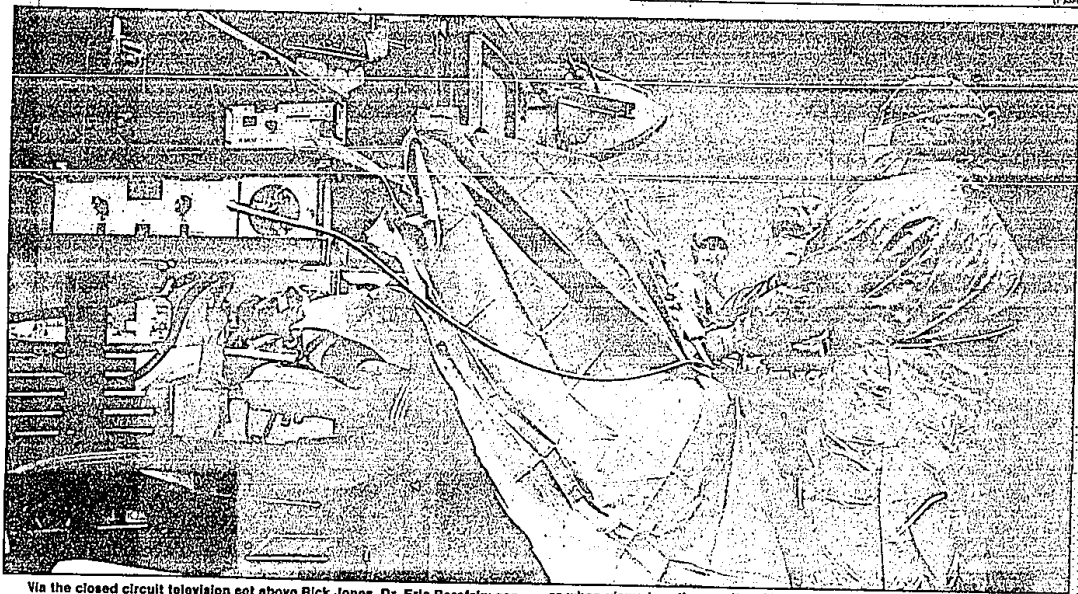


'Arthroscopy provides tremendous savings in recovery time for the patient, and in expenses.'

— Eric Borofsky, doctor



The arthroscope — a tiny probe fitted with fiber-optic lights and a tiny TV camera — is the key to a relatively new knee-joint surgery technique.



Via the closed circuit television set above Rick Jones, Dr. Eric Borofsky can see inside the knee — an underwater scene of mostly white and off-white. There is an absence of blood because a tourniquet has been applied above the knee. The miniature instruments inserted in the knee appear much larg-

er when viewed on the monitor. The surgeon's eyes must be concentrated away from his hands and on the TV monitor, while he manipulates instruments and directs the surgical team.

TV screen advances knee surgery

Rick Jones played fullback and right halfback for Dickinson Junior High in Livonia.

"Then everyone else grew a foot — and I didn't," the 5-foot, 3-inch Jones said with a laugh.

However, the damage was done. And Jones, now 27, married, a father and living in Westland, had been experiencing a knee problem for five years.

As he explains it, "My left knee was on the loose side. The joint would rub against the back of the knee cap, and arthritis had set in."

His job as a tile setter is particularly hard on knees. By the end of the day, "It would swell up and get a fever in it."

Sometimes it would hurt so much I couldn't sleep."

LUCKILY, JONES and other athletes and former athletes with knee problems have an alternative to open-knee surgery — arthroscopy.

It's a relatively new knee joint surgery technique in which the surgeon relies on a television monitor to view the interior of the knee, determining the condition and correction required and, finally, performing the necessary corrective work, according to Dr. Eric Borofsky.

Borofsky is one of several doctors who performs the surgery at Redford

Community Hospital in Redford Township.

The arthroscope is a tiny probe inserted through a small puncture on one side of the knee, he described. Fitted with fiber-optic lights and a tiny TV camera, the arthroscope gives the orthopedic surgeon an excellent color view of the knee's interior, without resorting to the customary incision.

BECAUSE ONLY three punctures under general anesthesia are required, it can be performed as an out-patient procedure.

The first puncture inserts sterile water into the knee, inflating it from its normal "softened" condition around

the knee joint, detailed Borofsky, a Southfield resident with a medical practice in Farmington Hills.

Two more punctures are made, for the arthroscope and the instruments. The TV monitor and instruments are on a stainless steel table above the patient.

After examining the knee's condition, repairs may involve shaving the underside of the knee cap, cartilage repair or removal and repair of ligaments.

Patients generally go home the same day with a bulky dressing protecting and immobilizing the knee. They experience much less

discomfort than in open-knee surgery, Borofsky said.

"ARTHROSCOPY PROVIDES tremendous savings in recovery time for the patient, and in expenses," Borofsky said.

"Up to five years ago, the most common way to correct knee problems was to open up the knee. Now with arthroscopy the surgical time is reduced to as little as a half hour, up to 90 minutes if there are complications.

Further advantages are: smaller incisions resulting in less trauma to the patient, speedier recovery (three to four weeks vs. up to eight weeks after open surgery, followed by use of

crutches) and substantially reduced risk of infection.

A month following surgery, Jones said his knee is nearly at full strength.

"It's amazing," he was "a little stiff the next day," but never had to take anything for pain. "I'd recommend it to anyone."

Borofsky estimates about half his patients come in following sports injuries and are usually under 30 years old; the others may have been experiencing pain over a period of time, the result of wear on the joint, frequently from an old injury.

The hospital performed 101 arthroscopies last year, and 27 so far this year.



Dr. Eric Borofsky explains the procedure to Rick Jones ahead of knee surgery performed last month at Redford Community

Hospital. Jones, 27, of Westland attributed a weak and painful left knee to playing football as a teenager.



Redford Community Hospital attendant Calvin Stewart checks Rick Jones — still under anesthesia — in the recovery room.

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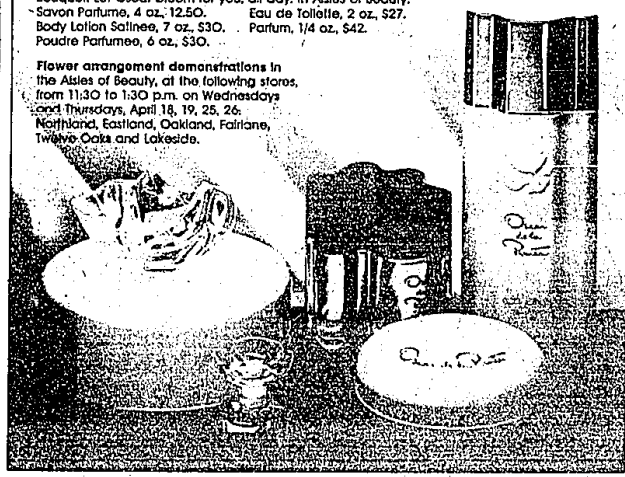
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