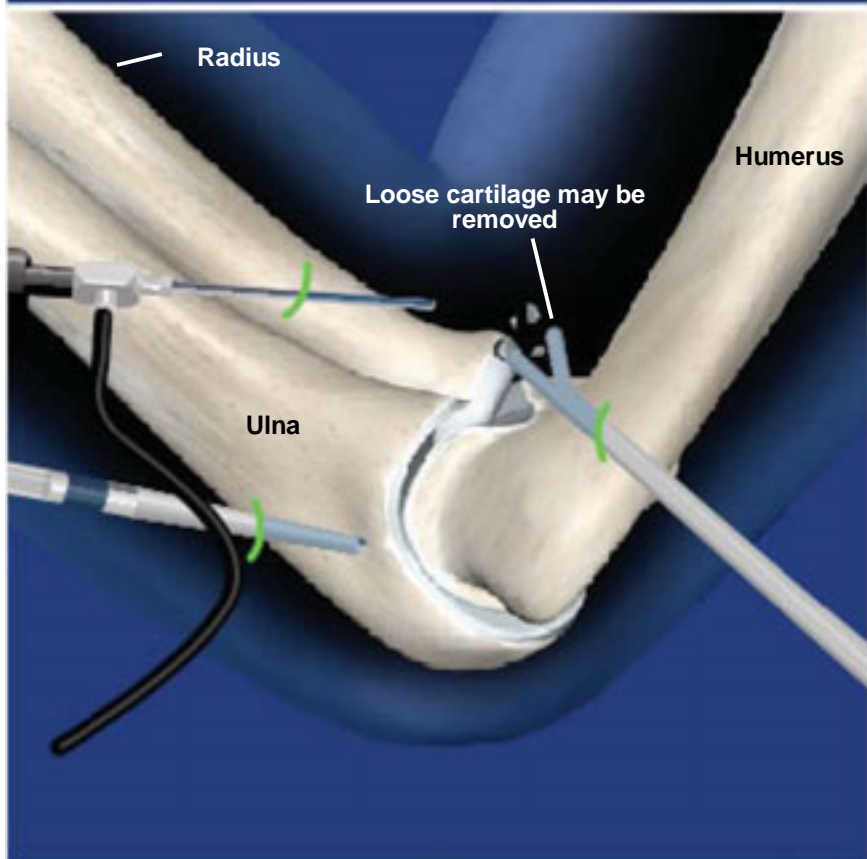




ARTHROSCOPIC DEBRIDEMENT OF THE ELBOW



Overview

This outpatient procedure, performed under local anesthesia with sedation or general anesthesia, allows the physician to examine the cartilage, bones, ligaments and tendons of the elbow for damage or disorders. The physician uses a small camera, called an arthroscope, which is inserted into the elbow.

Preparation

The patient is positioned so the elbow can be bent comfortably, and the area is cleaned and sterilized. Local anesthesia is administered to numb the injection site and a sedative is provided to relax the patient. General anesthesia may sometimes be used.

Accessing the Elbow

The surgeon creates a series of small incisions around the elbow and inserts an arthroscopic camera and other tools. The camera allows the surgeon to view the procedure on a monitor.

The Examination

The surgeon injects fluid into the space around the elbow to expand the joint and provide a clear view. The surgeon carefully examines the joint to look for signs of damage.

Repairing the Joint

Once the elbow has been diagnosed, the physician may use one or more of the arthroscopic tools to repair any damage. Bone spurs may be filed down, and loose or damaged cartilage may be removed.

End of Procedure

The incisions are closed with sutures or surgical staples. The elbow is bandaged. The patient will be given pain relievers and should be able to leave the hospital the same day.