

OSTEOCHONDRITIS DISSECANS

Osteochondritis dissecans (OCD) is where the blood supply to a region of the joint has been disrupted. The resultant effect is the underlying bone and overlying cartilage can separate and even fragment off. The most common locations that this occurs is in the knee, ankle and elbow. Patients can present with pain, swelling and mechanical symptoms such as “catching” or “feeling unstable.”

OCD can present typically in the ages of 10-15 but it can certainly occur in those younger. It is more common in males.

Good prognostic factors include age and location.

Investigations involve X-rays of the knee and further investigation would entail an MRI.

Management involves both non-operative and operative. Non-operative treatment involves activity modification and cessation of the activities that will load the OCD. Healing of an OCD may take months or even over a year. Progress imaging would need to be done to monitor the OCD. Operative treatment would involve stabilizing the fragment and inducing a healing response from the body. If it is large and irreparable then there are other options available to address the cartilage defect.



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