



Orthopedics channel

Reported May 16, 2008

Helping Knees Heal Themselves

COLUMBIA, Mo. (Ivanhoe Newswire) -- Torn cartilage in the knee can be painful and often times difficult to repair, but a new device is helping those hard to treat tears heal themselves.

Tackling, pivoting, cutting. Playing college football is hard on the body. Starting right guard, number 78, Kurtis Gregory, knows that all too well.

"My rear end hit the floor and I just kinda felt something that didn't seem right," Gregory told Ivanhoe.

Gregory tore his meniscus -- the cushion of cartilage in the knee that provides padding and stability to the joint.

"Once the meniscus is torn, unless it's repaired anatomically you will have altered function in the knee," Steve Kane, M.D., chief of orthopedic sports medicine at the University of Missouri School of Medicine in Columbia, Mo., told Ivanhoe.

"I couldn't even walk to practice," Gregory said.



Torn menisci are often difficult to repair or irreparable and removed -- resulting in joint pain that can lead to arthritis. But now researchers have found a way to help torn menisci heal themselves. Doctor Jimi Cook -- a veterinarian -- has been testing a new device -- called a BioDuct -- in some *furry* knees.

"Dogs knees and human knees are really comparable both in the problem that occurs and the way that we treat them," Jimi Cook, DVM, Ph.D., director of the Comparative Orthopaedic Laboratory at the University of Missouri, told Ivanhoe.

Together, Dr. Cook and Dr. Kane conducted research that lead to the FDA approval of BioDuct in humans. BioDuct works by acting as tunnel to transport cells and blood from the vascular outer part of a meniscus to the site of the tear, which doesn't receive blood flow.

"We're actually kind of plumbing the meniscus. The cells and the blood supply to allow them to heal is just not there in that tissue, so this device actually bring that in a directed manner," Dr. Cook said.

The device is implanted arthroscopically and is bioabsorbable, so it doesn't need to be removed. With adequate blood supply, a meniscus tear can heal itself completely in less than 12 weeks -- getting *everyone* back on their feet pain free!

Dr. Kane says the BioDuct is ready to be used to treat human meniscus tears and will be widely available within the next few months.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Schwartz Biomedical
<http://www.schwartzbiomedical.com>

Dr. Jimi Cook
<http://www.columc.missouri.edu>