

Increase in number of total knee replacement surgeries, especially in younger adults, linked to obesity

4 June 2014

The number of total knee replacement (TKR) surgeries more than tripled between 1993 and 2009, while the number of total hip replacements (THR) doubled during the same time period. A study appearing in the June *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery (JBJS)* found that an increase in the prevalence of overweight and obesity in the U.S. accounted for 95 percent of the higher demand for knee replacements, with younger patients affected to a greater degree.

"We observed that growth of knee replacement volumes was far outpacing that of hip replacements and were curious as to the origins of this trend," said lead study author Peter B. Derman, MD, MBA, an orthopaedic [surgery](#) resident at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York, N.Y.

Previous studies have found a strong link between a higher body mass index (BMI) and [knee osteoarthritis](#). The effects of weight on [hip osteoarthritis](#) were less clear. In this study, researchers reviewed at least 10 years of national data (through 2009) on TKR and THR volume, length of hospital stay, in-hospital mortality, and orthopaedic workforce trends.

Among the study findings:

- TKR volume has far outpaced that of THR for patients with a body mass index (BMI) of ≥ 25 kg/m² (persons with a BMI of ≥ 25 kg/m² and

APA citation: Increase in number of total knee replacement surgeries, especially in younger adults, linked to obesity (2014, June 4) retrieved 8 April 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-06-total-knee-surgeries-younger-adults.html>

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