

Greenville Surgeon Jack Thomas, M.D., Introduces Natural-Shape Knee Implant

Orthopedic surgeon Jack Thomas, M.D. of Greenville Orthopedic, recently trained in the use of the next-generation Journey knee replacement system, which is the first implant designed to restore natural knee motion by uniquely reproducing the internal shapes and forces of the human knee.

Unlike its four decades of predecessors, the innovative Journey anatomical knee system is designed to move and feel like a normal knee, and addresses problems still found in conventional systems such as instability and limited flexion.

“I’m thrilled and excited to be one of the first orthopedists in the nation to offer the Journey implant for my patients,” says Dr. Thomas. “Its design is so simple and so logical, I can’t believe we’ve had to wait this long for the concept. It’s truly a leap forward for knee replacement surgery.”

The knee is a hinge joint, but it does not swing like a simple door hinge. It has a complex rotational element that you don’t notice is there—but many patients know when it’s not after total knee replacement. Traditional implants attempt to recreate this natural swing-and-rotate with either a rotating platform (a simple pivot point) within the implant or by requiring an unnatural, angled alignment of the implant during surgery.

The Journey knee, however, was designed to reproduce the actual internal shapes and angled forces of the knee through each phase of motion—accommodating the swing-and-rotate of the joint with the same engineering principles the human knee uses.

Further, the system is described as “bi-cruciate stabilized”, or double-cross shaped, because unlike conventional knee systems, this design provides functions for both the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) and posterior cruciate ligament (PCL). These ligaments provide stability and support for the knee, but are frequently removed during knee replacement surgery.

According to Dr. Thomas, “This Journey knee system is the only knee replacement on the market that offers patients more natural movement and function, and provides surgeons with an answer to the challenges of current total knee systems. This is well-suited for high-demand or active patients and it’s also very fulfilling for me to be able to offer people another way to improve their lives”.