Understanding anatomy, pain, treatment, and replacement surgery
Most people don’t think about the movement of their joints until their joints become diseased and painful.

Normally, your elbow joint moves easily, but when you have arthritis or an elbow injury, the pain can severely limit your ability to move and enjoy life.

This brochure will help you understand elbow anatomy, treatment options for your elbow pain and total elbow replacement surgery. Understanding your options will help you choose the best course of treatment to relieve your pain.
HOW THE ELBOW WORKS

The elbow is a hinge joint that allows your arm to bend and straighten like a hinge. It is at the junction of the humerus (upper arm bone), the ulna (the larger of the two forearm bones) and the radius bone (the smaller bone of the forearm on the same side as the thumb). There are three equally important joints that make up the elbow:

- **Humeroradial and Humeroulnar joints**
  The joints formed where the radius and humerus (humeroradial), and where the ulna and humerus (humeroulnar) meet. Together, these joints allow you to bend and straighten your arm.

- **Proximal radioulnar joint**
  The joint where the radius and ulna meet. It allows you to rotate the lower arm.

COMMON CAUSES OF ELBOW PAIN

Arthritis is a condition that affects the cartilage of the joints. As the cartilage lining wears away, the protective lining between the bones is lost. When this happens, painful bone-on-bone arthritis develops. Severe elbow arthritis is quite painful and can restrict motion in your arm. While this may be tolerated with some medications and lifestyle adjustments, there may come a time when surgical treatment is necessary.
ORTHOPAEDIC EVALUATION

To properly diagnose your condition, your orthopaedic surgeon will conduct a thorough evaluation, which may consist of:

- Review of your medical history
- Physical examination
- X-rays
- Additional tests as needed
  (for example: laboratory testing of blood, urine, or joint fluid)

TREATMENT OPTIONS

Depending on your diagnosis and the severity of your condition, your treatment options may include medications, which may include cortisone injections for temporary pain relief, and/or physical therapy. When elbow pain and mobility affect your lifestyle, and conservative treatments are not effective, surgery may be needed.

ELBOW REPLACEMENT SURGERY

The goals of elbow replacement surgery are to promote pain relief and help increase the range of motion. Elbow replacement involves the removal of arthritic bone ends and damaged cartilage and replacing them with prosthetic implants that are designed to replicate the elbow joint.
THE PROCEDURE

In surgery, special instruments are used to measure your elbow and precisely cut the bone. Once your surgeon gains exposure to the joint, the worn end of the humerus and the ulna bones will be removed. Then replacement metal components are placed into the humerus and ulna. The two components are connected, so the implants hinge together to replicate the elbow joint. Your surgeon will conduct several tests during the surgery to help ensure you regain motion in your elbow.

DISCOVERY® ELBOW PROSTHESIS

The Discovery Elbow is designed to restore motion and reduce pain in patients with severe elbow arthritis. It provides options to help adjust to and restore individual patient anatomy for a more natural-feeling elbow.
IMPLANT LONGEVITY
Vitamin E is a naturally-occurring antioxidant that has been added to some plastic (polyethylene) implants. Blended Vitamin E polyethylene helps provide smooth movement throughout range of motion, maintains the strength of the plastic implant and is shown to reduce long-term wear by up to 92%, which may extend the life of your implant.\(^1\)

RECOVERY
While total elbow replacements have many benefits, including decreased pain and increased motion, these implants are susceptible to loosening over time. Make sure you follow your doctor’s instruction on how much weight you can lift and what activities you should or shouldn’t do to prevent early loosening of your new elbow.

SUMMARY
Your orthopedic specialist will recommend the appropriate treatment and prosthesis for your particular condition. Just know that you don’t have to live with severe elbow pain. If conservative treatments have not been effective for you, talk to your doctor about elbow replacement.
1. Data on file at DJO Surgical®

Individual results may vary. DJO Surgical® is a manufacturer of orthopedic implants and does not practice medicine. Only an orthopedic surgeon can determine what treatment is appropriate. Individual results of total joint replacement may vary. The life of any implant will depend on the patient’s weight, age, activity level, and other factors. For more information on risks, warnings, and possible adverse effects please speak with your doctor directly; you should always ask your doctor if you have any questions regarding your particular condition or treatment options.