

Editorial



Higher Meniscus Surgery Incidence in Korea Compared to Japan or the USA

Jang Won Park

Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Ewha Womans University School of Medicine, Ewha Seoul Hospital, Seoul, Korea



► See the article “National Trends of Meniscectomy and Meniscus Repair in Korea” in volume 34, number 32, e206.

Received: Aug 9, 2019

Accepted: Aug 14, 2019

Address for Correspondence:

Jang Won Park, MD, PhD

Department of Orthopedic Surgery, Ewha Womans University School of Medicine, 260 Gonghang-daero, Gangseo-gu, Seoul 07804, Korea.

E-mail: jp@ewha.ac.kr

© 2019 The Korean Academy of Medical Sciences.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>) which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

ORCID iDs

Jang Won Park

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6269-6451>

Disclosure

The author has no potential conflicts of interest to disclose.

Big data is a familiar term that is commonly used, and many big data are now being produced in many areas of society including medicine. In Europe and the commonwealth countries, there are many registries based on their socialist health care system, and there have been many research reports based on those registries.

In Korea, there have been only a few research papers based on the registered data of the Korea Health Insurance Review and Assessment (HIRA). Chung et al.¹ report in the present issue is one of those papers. Orthopedic surgery of the meniscus is the most commonly performed operation among the whole orthopedic specialty but there are no reports based on the big data from Korea. Chung et al.¹ analyzed annual reports of meniscus surgery from HIRA in Korea and compared with those of Japan,² and the United States.³ According to this study, there were 65,752 meniscectomy cases in 2010, and the number of cases increased to 74,088 in 2017. During the same period, the number of meniscus repair cases were 9,055 in 2010, and 14,947 in 2017.¹ The rate of increase in meniscectomy was 12.67% whereas that of meniscus repair was 65.04% during the same period. The data showed significant increase of meniscus repairs in Korea. Although the study period was not same, the incidence of the meniscus surgeries per 100,000 population-year was 22 in Japan (2015), and 17 in the United States (2011) while it ranged from 137 to 154 in 2010–2017 in Korea. The finding suggests meniscus surgery is definitely more common in Korea. That may be partly an outcome of national health insurance system which helps patients easily access the orthopedic surgeons in Korea.

This study's findings are interesting and may have impact because it used the national data of Korea which reflect the whole nation's health care status. Although this study reflects the current national status of the meniscectomy in Korea, we must be very cautious interpreting and comparing the findings with data of Japan and the United States together because the medical care system and the social environment are different. To make further interpretation, another form of study or analysis must accompany including cost benefits. It is also strongly recommended to investigate the national data of HIRA for other diseases and surgical interventions in Korea.

REFERENCES

1. Chung KS, Ha JK, Kim YS, Kim JH, Ra HJ, Kong DH, et al. National trends of meniscectomy and meniscus repair in Korea. *J Korean Med Sci* 2019;34(32):e206.
[CROSSREF](#)
2. Katano H, Koga H, Ozeki N, Otabe K, Mizuno M, Tomita M, et al. Trends in isolated meniscus repair and meniscectomy in Japan, 2011–2016. *J Orthop Sci* 2018;23(4):676-81.
[PUBMED](#) | [CROSSREF](#)
3. Abrams GD, Frank RM, Gupta AK, Harris JD, McCormick FM, Cole BJ Trends in meniscus repair and meniscectomy in the United States, 2005–2011. *Am J Sports Med* 2013;41(10):2333-9.
[PUBMED](#) | [CROSSREF](#)