

Advancing orthopedic care in eastern North Carolina



At ECU Health Orthopedics – Washington and ECU Health Orthopedics - Kenansville, Dr. Dimitri Thomas offers cutting-edge orthopedic procedures designed to preserve joint function, reduce recovery time, and improve quality of life for patients. Here are three procedures now available or coming soon:

Cartilage transplantation

For younger, active patients with isolated cartilage defects, Dr. Thomas offers two advanced cartilage restoration techniques:

- **Fresh osteochondral allograft transplantation (OCA):** Healthy bone and cartilage from a donor are transplanted directly into the damaged area.
- **Autologous cartilage transplantation (ACT):** The patient's own cartilage is harvested, cultured in a lab, and returned as immature cartilage cells on a membrane, which is then glued into the defect to regenerate healthy tissue.

This procedure is ideal for younger, more active patients with isolated cartilage defects that are not good candidates for total knee replacement.

Meniscal root tear repair

Meniscus tears are common, but root and radial tears are particularly severe. Without repair, these injuries mimic the effects of a missing meniscus, accelerating arthritis and leading to early joint degeneration. Dr. Thomas performs meniscal root repair to restore the knee's natural shock absorption. Though recovery is significant, the long-term benefits include preserved joint function and delayed onset of arthritis.

Transosseous rotator cuff repair

The transosseous (TO) repair combines the benefits of the traditional bone tunnel technique and the arthroscopic technique for rotator cuff repair. Using advanced arthroscopic instrumentation, this method allows surgeons to create precise bone tunnels through minimally invasive incisions, eliminating the need for bulky suture anchors. This approach reduces overall procedure costs and lowers the risk of pain and complications, improving patient recovery.

To refer a patient:

- **Submit through EHR:** Send a request through Epic/CareLink to COMM-ORTHOPEDICS – WASHINGTON or COMM-ORTHOPEDICS – KENANSVILLE
- **Submit by fax:** Send patient notes to 252-946-6513 (Washington) or 910-296-2616 (Kenansville)
- Login to CareLink or call 252-948-0808 (Washington) or 910-296-8080 (Kenansville) to check the status of your referral