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Brigham knee surgery draws attention, but still needs approvals

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By **Matt Rocheleau**

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A surgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital became the first doctor in New England and just the sixth in the country to perform an innovative knee surgery.

Dr. Andreas Gomoll inserted a newly-invented artificial implant — which is in the midst of Food and Drug Administration trials — to replace the meniscus of a Massachusetts man who had the key piece of knee tissue removed during a surgery years ago.

“There was nothing really like this before,” said Gomoll.

The meniscus, which is rubbery and horseshoe-shaped, serves as a “shock absorber” and also limits the deterioration of cartilage in the knee that keeps the shin and thigh bones from rubbing together, which can be painful, Gomoll said.

The surgery drew attention Tuesday online. But another knee specialist, Dr. Nicholas DiNubile, a spokesman for the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, said FDA approval for such procedures can be tough.

“I would still be very cautious and see how it works out,” he said. “This is one of those things where

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you're going to have to see how it plays out.”

DiNubile said other somewhat promising efforts are also underway to develop a “biological scaffold” to try to regrow some of the natural meniscus tissue. He said that type of a surgery would be “the holy grail” of meniscus repair because biological tissue is more likely to fit properly and not wear down.


The surgery Gomoll performed was previously reported on by [WCVB-TV](#).

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