

surgeries this way. He also repairs knees and cartilage tears this way.

Reynolds describes how arthroscopic surgery is done, using a camera and tiny puncture holes, as opposed to completely opening the shoulder or other injured area. "The pain is a lot less," he says, "and the recovery is a lot quicker." There's also a lower risk of infection," he says, of arthroscopy, which is often done on an out-patient basis at a surgery center.

"Minimally invasive hip and knee surgery has allowed us to make much smaller incisions," says Dr. Heligman. Incisions are now typically only 4-6 inches for a hip or knee, with less tissue trauma, less pain and a quicker recovery. "With our newer technologies," he says, "we're able to get these weekend warriors back to a very active lifestyle: aggressive tennis, golf, and overall, an improved quality of life."

Preventive measures

Dr. Kagan gives advice to active types hoping to avoid a visit to the orthopedist. "You have to understand that the main protective force that we have for our joints," he says, "are our muscles and ligaments. "It's very important you to maintain good muscle fitness. And it's very important to warm up," before any physical activity, he explains, warning that if you don't, "You're going to hurt yourself."

"There's got to be blood supply going to the area," he says, "before you go out and provide a maximal effort." Kagan advises active types to put an emphasis on being "properly rested, getting proper nutrition, and then being properly fit to do the activity you want to do." These kinds of things give you a level of protection," he says, "and then you've done all you can do." ■

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