

## **Costs of Total Joint Arthroplasty**

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**INTRODUCTION:** The volume of total joint arthroplasty (TJA) has grown in recent decades and remains an expensive procedure. Physician reimbursement continues to decline for this time and labor-intensive procedure. Many patients still have little understanding of how costs are distributed in the healthcare system when it comes to reimbursement for care. This study aimed to explore patients' perspectives on the allocation of TJA cost.

**METHODS:** We identified patients who presented for surgical consultation for knee replacement surgery by the senior author at our institution in 2021. During this time, new patients were given a survey at the clinic asking (i) how much they thought a surgeon is paid for the surgery, and (ii) what percentage of the total cost of surgery they thought is allocated to the surgeon, implant company, and hospital. Seventy-three patients completed the survey.

**RESULTS:** Of the 73 patients who responded to the survey, 11 (15%) thought the surgeon is paid \$1000 - \$2000, 23 (32%) thought the surgeon is paid \$2001 - \$5000, and 39 (53%) thought the surgeon is paid more than \$5000 for a TJA. For the total cost of TJA, the mean allotment was 26% to surgeons, 27% to implant cost, and 47% to hospital cost.

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:** Patients grossly overestimated the payment to a surgeon for performing total joint arthroplasty. Patients thought that hospitals received approximately half the fees for a TJA, while surgeons and implant manufacturers received similar smaller amounts. Better understanding of the cost of healthcare is needed to educate and inform patients of where healthcare dollars are being spent.