

Osteoarthritis: Brown Trapezial Arthroplasty

"I know I've got arthritis in this hand and there's nothing that can be done." **Wrong!**

There's plenty we can do to eliminate pain and restore function *if it's time* for surgical intervention.

Osteoarthritis is "wear and tear" degenerative arthritis. The gliding smooth cartilage in the joints becomes thin and wears away causing swelling and pain as the disease progresses. Anti-inflammatory



Barry Corbin
Film & Screen Actor

medications and glucosamine/ chondroitin (over the counter) can help somewhat. Eventually when patches of cartilage are lost there is very painful bone-to-bone contact in the joint. This induces the formation of bone spurs (osteophytes). The pain can become unbearable. There may be good and bad days. A coffee cup is dropped when a sharp pain shoots through the base of the thumb. Motion is lost. The sufferer doesn't trust himself or herself to even pick up the cup not knowing if the sharp pain will suddenly cause the hand to release sending the cup crashing to the floor. Now it's more than a "nuisance pain" or an unsightly bump at the joint. Life is becoming miserable.

At The Hand Center, we have developed procedures for outpatient total joint replacement to reduce or eliminate pain and restore function. One of the most commonly affected joints is the metacarpal trapezial joint at the base of the thumb.

In 1989, the BROWN Trapezial Arthroplasty was developed here at The Hand Center. We have successfully treated hundreds of patients from all walks of life, returning function and eliminating pain. In one



Dr. Brown & Barry Corbin
Reviewing X-rays

instance, a surgeon could no longer hold his instruments. Four weeks after performing BROWN Trapezial Arthroplasty, the surgeon resumed his work operating on others. Some surgeons still treat this condition by fusing the joint at the base of the

thumb. We find the loss of motion and incidence of recurrent pain unacceptable following the fusion procedure and therefore we do not use this technique.

Dr. Brown's procedure completely replaces the basal thumb joint with a precisely fitted soft tissue spacer that preserves function and eliminates pain while properly maintaining the biomechanics of the thumb. Other techniques such as palmaris longus tendon arthroplasty are not as biomechanically sound and can lead to thumb swan-neck deformity. We have found the BROWN Trapezial Arthroplasty highly dependable and effective compared to many other techniques in use. The need for further surgery on the joint is exceedingly rare. The 30 minute procedure is performed on an outpatient basis.

Osteoarthritis: Brown Trapezial Arthroplasty

Basal Thumb Joint Replacement



X-ray showing metacarpal trapezial arthritis, bone spurs, joint space narrowing, “bone on bone” grinding at the base of the thumb. This can cause severe pain limiting thumb function.



The trapezium bone is removed



Allograft soft-tissue implant is designed in the operating room to precisely fit the joint.



Implant in place providing proper spacing and cushion for thumb movement without “bone on bone” pain.



Post-operative x-ray