What is an orthopedic surgeon?
An orthopaedic surgeon is a medical doctor who has received up to 14 years of education in the diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and prevention of injuries and diseases of the musculoskeletal system (bones and joints, muscles, ligaments, tendons, and cartilage).

Some orthopaedic surgeons practice general orthopaedics, while others specialize in treating certain body parts such as the foot and ankle, hand and wrist, spine, knee, shoulder, or hip. Some orthopaedists may also focus on a specific population such as pediatrics, trauma, or sports medicine.

What is arthroscopic surgery?
Arthroscopic surgery is one of the most common orthopaedic procedures performed today. Through the use of small instruments and cameras, an orthopaedic surgeon can visualize, diagnose, and treat problems within the joints.

One or more small incisions are made around the joint to be viewed. The surgeon inserts an instrument called an arthroscope into the joint. The arthroscope contains a fiber optic light source and small television camera that allows the surgeon to view the joint on a television monitor and diagnose the problem, determine the extent of injury, and make any necessary repairs. Other instruments may be inserted to help view or repair the tissues inside the joint.

What is joint replacement surgery?
Joint replacement surgery is performed to replace an arthritic or damaged joint with a new, artificial joint called a prosthesis. The knee and hip are the most commonly replaced joints, although shoulders, elbows and ankles can also be replaced.

Joints contain cartilage, a rubbery material that cushions the ends of bones and facilitates movement. Over time, or if the joint has been injured, the cartilage wears away and the bones of the joint start rubbing together. As bones rub together, bone spurs may form and the joint becomes stiff and painful. Most people have joint replacement surgery when they can no longer control the pain in their hip or knee with medication and other treatments, and the pain is significantly interfering with their lives.

How long do artificial joints last?
On average, artificial joints have a lifespan of 10 to 20 years. If you are in your 40s or 50s when you have joint replacement surgery, especially if you are very active, you are likely to need another joint replacement surgery later in life.
What happens during rotator cuff surgery?
Shoulder surgery for rotator cuff problems usually involves one or more of the following procedures: debridement, subacromial decompression, or rotator cuff repair.

Debridement clears damaged tissue out of the shoulder joint.

Subacromial decompression involves shaving bone or removing spurs underneath the tip of the shoulder blade (acromion). This creates more room in the space between the end of the shoulder blade and the upper arm bone so that the rotator cuff tendon is not pinched and can glide smoothly.

If the rotator cuff tendon is torn, it is sewn together and reattached to the top of the upper arm bone.

What is an ACL reconstruction?
ACL reconstruction is a surgical procedure that repairs a torn anterior cruciate ligament (ACL), one of the four ligaments that help stabilize the knee. The ligament is reconstructed using a tendon that is passed through the inside of the knee joint and secured to the upper leg bone (femur) and one of the two lower leg bones (tibia).

The tendon used for reconstruction is called a graft and can come from different sources. It is usually taken from the patient’s own patella, hamstring, or quadriceps, or it can come from a cadaver. ACL reconstruction is most often performed through arthroscopic surgery.