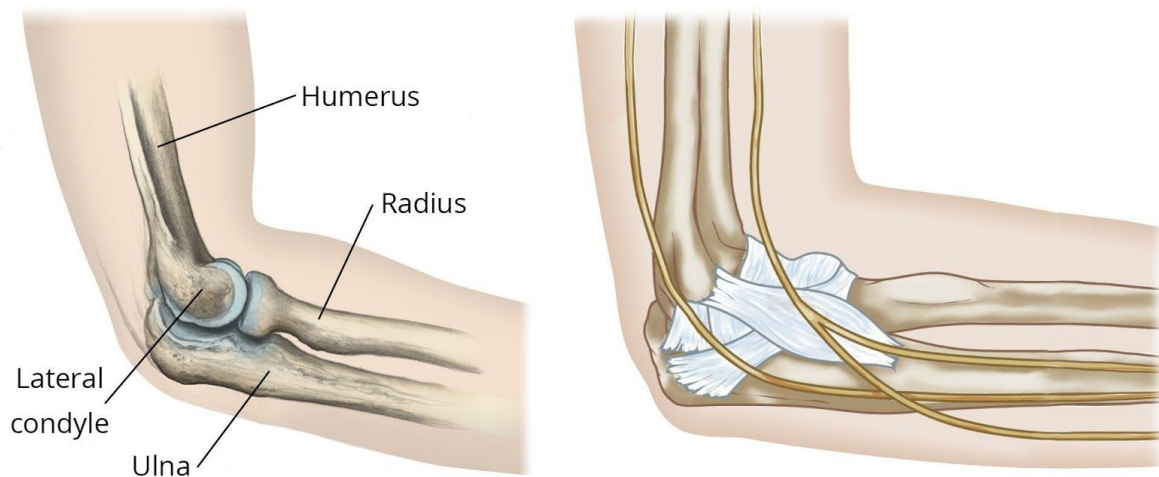


# **Elbow Replacement**

Elbow replacement surgery is a complicated procedure partly because the elbow has several moving parts that balance each other with great precision to control the movements of your forearm.

Your elbow can be damaged by problems ranging from rheumatoid arthritis to traumatic fractures. In some cases, the

damage can be surgically repaired. But if the damage is extensive, your doctor might recommend elbow replacement surgery. Pain is the most common reason people choose to have elbow replacement surgery.



# **Types of elbow replacement**

In some cases, you may need a replacement of just one portion of the joint. For example, if only the head of one of your forearm bones (radius) is damaged, it can be replaced with an artificial head.

If the entire joint needs to be replaced, the ends of the bones that come together in the elbow will be removed. Bones are hard tubes that contain a soft center.

The long, slender ends of the artificial joint are inserted into the softer central part of the bones.

There are two main types of prosthetic devices available:

- **Linked.** This type of prosthesis acts somewhat like a loose hinge because all the parts of the replacement joint are connected. This provides good joint stability,

but the stresses of movement can sometimes result in the prosthesis working itself loose from where it's inserted into the arm bones.

- **Unlinked.** This type of device comes in two separate pieces that aren't connected to each other. This design depends on the surrounding ligaments to help hold the

joint together, which can make it more prone to dislocation.

