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Dr. Kirt Kimball Participates in Partial Knee Replacement Study

Dr. Kirt Kimball, orthopedic surgeon, has been invited to participate in a small group of surgeons from Europe and the U.S. in evaluating and applying mini-incision approaches with computer technology in performing partial knee replacements. The intent is to perfect technology to perform partial knee replacement surgery through a four cm incision. This will combine computer assisted and arthroscopic techniques. Dr. Kimball's experience in computer assisted knee replacement combined with his experience in arthroscopic knee surgery make him an ideal candidate to participate in the study. The first phase of the study will include hours of work in a special cadaver lab in Chicago practicing the application of these innovative techniques on cadaver specimens.

Dr. Kirt Kimball also was part of a 12-member USA group of orthopedic surgeons who participated in the annual meeting of the International Society for Computer Assisted Orthopedic Surgery. The meeting was held June 19-22 in Helsinki, Finland. It included scientific discussions, demonstrations and the sharing of experience with approximately 300 surgeons and scientists from Europe and Asia. "The Europeans are currently ahead of the U.S. in effective use of computer assisted advances in technology in knee replacement, hip replacement, trauma and spine surgery," said Dr. Kimball. "New levels of precision and accuracy have been obtained resulting in better, more reliable results for patients."

Computer technology has now been combined with tissue sparing surgical approaches to provide better results through smaller incisions with better clinical outcomes. A number of surgeons have brought this technology to their US patients. American surgeon support for these changes is spreading rapidly as evidenced by US surgeons signing up for courses where they can obtain training in these skills. The equipment for this surgery is expensive and hospitals whose focus is profitability are often reluctant to invest in the technology. Experts in the field believe physician and patient demand for this technology will cause it to become the standard of care in this country over the next few years.