Understanding Patella Baja in Total Knee Arthroplasty, Avoiding a Roadblock in Recovery

Patella baja is an abnormally low-lying patella or decreased space between the inferior pole of the patella and the tibial tubercle.

It is an uncommon yet disabling condition of total knee arthroplasty.

Determining the etiology will help guide appropriate treatment for patella baja after total knee arthroplasty.

Etiology
- Previous knee surgeries
  - Anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction
  - Retrograde femoral nail
  - Infrapatellar fat pad resection
  - Previous total knee arthroplasty

Diagnosis
- Measurement of patellar height
  - Insall-Salvati ratio
  - Distinction from pseudopatella baja
  - Blackburne-Peel ratio

Treatment
- Tibial tubercle osteotomy
- Distal femoral augment and revision
- Proximalization of patellar component
- Modification of anterior tibial component
- Z-plasty of patellar tendon

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