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Method and apparatus for effecting osteochondral restoration

Abstract

There is disclosed apparatus for effecting osteochondral restoration. In an embodiment, the apparatus includes a tube having a distal end, a proximal end and a lumen extending therebetween. A drill shaft is rotatably disposed in the lumen of the tube, the drill shaft comprising a distal end and a proximal end. At least one cutting blade is disposed at the distal end of the drill shaft. A coring housing extends from the distal end of the tube and disposed around the at least one cutting blade, the coring housing terminating in a distal cutting surface. Other embodiments are also disclosed.

Inventors:	Thies; Brendan (Woodstock, GA), Sluder; Justin (Marietta, GA), Boros; Leigh Anne (Marietta, GA), Braun; Stephen Wilson (Marietta, GA)
Applicant:	Allosource (Centennial, CO)
Family ID:	1000008751691
Assignee:	Allosource (Centennial, CO)
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Primary Examiner: Coley; Zade

Attorney, Agent or Firm: Sheridan Law, LLC

Background/Summary

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

(1) This invention relates to medical devices for use in surgical applications in general, and more particularly to novel methods and apparatus for effecting osteochondral restoration.

BACKGROUND

(2) Trauma and/or disease to articulating joints (e.g., the knee joint) can cause structural damage to

the articular cartilage surface and the underlying subchondral bone, resulting in pain and/or disability for the patient. The area of the articular cartilage (and/or underlying subchondral bone) that is damaged is commonly referred to as a “lesion”. Lesions may develop as the result of disease that affects the cartilage and/or bone or, perhaps more commonly, as the result of sporting injuries in which shear forces cause a separation of cartilage between the radial and calcified layers of bone. Chondral lesions lie entirely within the cartilage and do not penetrate into the subchondral bone. Osteochondral lesions penetrate the articular surface in depth, into the vascularized subchondral bone.

(3) To treat an osteochondral lesion, a surgeon must remove the diseased/damaged cartilage together with a portion of the underlying bone. The resulting cavity is then filled with either a cellular graft, an osteochondral graft, or an allograft/autograft derived cartilage implant. For the purposes of the instant disclosure, the term “allograft” is intended to mean a donor derived or artificially derived (e.g., synthetic, lab-grown, etc.) tissue graft, and the term “autograft” is intended to mean a tissue graft obtained from the patient that is being treated (i.e., a tissue graft transferred from one area of the patient's body to the treatment site).

(4) Currently, surgeons perform osteochondral restoration using a variety of different surgical instruments, often in concert with one another. By way of example, a surgical coring tool comprising a cylindrical thin-walled tube enclosing a lumen having a fixed cutting blade disposed perpendicular to the axis of the lumen may be used, with the surgeon manually rotating the coring tool in order to “core out” a plug of tissue and bone. Alternatively, a cannulated surgical drill bit configured to fit over a guidewire may be used in concert with an appropriate surgical drill in order to “drill out” a plug of tissue and bone. Alternatively, a ring curette and bone curette may be used to outline the lesion and another, smaller curette may be used to “remove” a plug of material outlined by the ring or bone curette.

(5) It will be appreciated that each of these surgical methods and apparatus result in a time-consuming procedure requiring a variety of different tools which sometimes do not match the size/geometry of the lesion that is to be removed. Moreover, tools such as a manually-operated coring tool, a drill bit or a curette require significant skill on the part of the surgeon in order to remove the lesion and prepare a cavity of the proper depth and size to receive the graft.

(6) Thus, there is a need for a new and improved method and apparatus for performing osteochondral restoration that combines the functions of various surgical instruments into a single device, which permits the surgeon to precisely locate and core circular sections of cartilage and bone to a precise depth so as to create a cavity for receiving a graft.

SUMMARY

(7) This Summary is provided to introduce a selection of concepts in a simplified form that are further described below in the Detailed Description. This Summary is not intended to identify key aspects or essential aspects of the claimed subject matter. Moreover, this Summary is not intended for use as an aid in determining the scope of the claimed subject matter.

(8) In various embodiments, there are provided method and apparatus for performing osteochondral restoration that combines the functions of various surgical instruments into a single device, and which permits the surgeon to precisely locate and core circular sections of cartilage and bone so as to create a cavity having a precise depth for receiving a graft.

(9) In an embodiment, there is provided apparatus for effecting osteochondral restoration, the apparatus comprising a tube having a distal end, a proximal end and a lumen extending therebetween; a drill shaft rotatably disposed in the lumen of the tube, the drill shaft comprising a distal end and a proximal end; at least one cutting blade disposed at the distal end of the drill shaft; and a coring housing extending from the distal end of the tube and disposed around the at least one cutting blade, the coring housing terminating in a distal cutting surface.

(10) In another embodiment, there is provided a method for effecting osteochondral restoration, the method comprising providing apparatus comprising a tube having a distal end, a proximal end and

a lumen extending therebetween; a drill shaft rotatably disposed in the lumen of the tube, the drill shaft comprising a distal end and a proximal end; at least one cutting blade disposed at the distal end of the drill shaft; and a coring housing extending from the distal end of the tube and disposed around the at least one cutting blade, the coring housing terminating in a distal cutting surface; placing the distal cutting surface over a lesion that is to be removed such that the lesion is bounded by the coring housing; applying a distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion; and moving the drill shaft distally and rotating the drill shaft such that the at least one cutting blade cuts into the tissue bounded by the coring housing, whereby to core out a cavity in the tissue comprising the lesion.

(11) Other embodiments are also disclosed.

(12) Additional objects, advantages and novel features of the technology will be set forth in part in the description which follows, and in part will become more apparent to those skilled in the art upon examination of the following, or may be learned from practice of the technology.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

(1) Non-limiting and non-exhaustive embodiments of the present invention, including the preferred embodiment, are described with reference to the following figures, wherein like reference numerals refer to like parts throughout the various views unless otherwise specified. Illustrative embodiments of the invention are illustrated in the drawings, in which:

(2) FIGS. 1-3 are schematic views showing a novel surgical coring apparatus formed in accordance with the present invention;

(3) FIGS. 4 and 5 are schematic views showing the novel surgical coring apparatus of FIGS. 1-3 with the handle omitted;

(4) FIGS. 6-8 are schematic views showing further aspects of the distal end of the novel surgical coring apparatus of FIGS. 1-3; and

(5) FIG. 9 is a schematic view showing further aspects of the proximal end of the novel surgical coring apparatus of FIGS. 1-3.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

(6) Embodiments are described more fully below in sufficient detail to enable those skilled in the art to practice the system and method. However, embodiments may be implemented in many different forms and should not be construed as being limited to the embodiments set forth herein. The following detailed description is, therefore, not to be taken in a limiting sense.

(7) In various embodiments, there may be provided a new and improved method and apparatus for performing osteochondral restoration that combines the functions of various surgical instruments into a single device, and which permits the surgeon to precisely locate and core circular sections of cartilage and bone so as to create a cavity having a precise depth for receiving a graft.

(8) Looking now at FIGS. 1-5, there is shown a novel surgical coring apparatus 5 formed in accordance with the present invention. Apparatus 5 generally comprises a tube 10, a drill shaft 15, a coring housing 20, and an over grip 25 disposed over a portion of tube 10, as will hereinafter be discussed in further detail.

(9) More particularly, and still looking at FIGS. 1-5, tube 10 comprises a distal end 30, a proximal end 35, and a lumen 40 extending therebetween. Lumen 40 of tube 10 is sized to slidably and rotatably receive drill shaft 15 therein such that drill shaft 15 can move longitudinally relative to tube 10 and/or rotate relative to tube 10, as will hereinafter be discussed. If desired, one or more windows 45 may be formed in the sidewall of tube 10 intermediate distal end 30 and proximal end 35 in order to communicate with lumen 40, whereby to facilitate mounting of over grip 25 to tube 10 and/or to facilitate passing an irrigation fluid or vacuum through tube 10, as will hereinafter be

discussed in further detail.

(10) Drill shaft **15** comprises a distal end **50** and a proximal end **55**. Proximal end **55** of drill shaft **15** comprises at least one flat **60** extending distally along a portion of drill shaft **15** for mounting a handle to proximal end **55** of drill shaft **15**, as will hereinafter be discussed in further detail. A drill bit **65** is mounted to, or formed integral with, distal end **50** of drill shaft **15**, as will hereinafter be discussed in further detail. A radially-extending stop **70** (FIG. 2) is mounted at a selected point along drill shaft **15** so as to prevent drill bit **65** from moving beyond the distal end of coring housing **20**, as will hereinafter be discussed in further detail.

(11) A handle **75** is preferably mounted to proximal end **55** of drill shaft **15**, whereby to permit manual movement (either longitudinal movement or rotational movement) of drill shaft **15** relative to tube **10**. Handle **75** comprises a recess **80** (FIG. 1) having at least one groove (not shown) configured to mate with flat **60** formed on proximal end **55** of drill shaft **15**, whereby to secure handle **75** to drill shaft **15** via a press fit. In one preferred form of the invention, drill shaft **15** comprises three flats **60** formed at proximal end **55**, whereby to present a triangular cross-section which is received in a complementary triangular-shaped recess **80** formed in handle **75**. As a result of this construction, manual movement (either longitudinal movement or rotational movement) of handle **75** causes corresponding longitudinal and/or rotational movement of drill shaft **15** (and hence of drill bit **65** mounted to distal end **50** of drill shaft **15**).

(12) Looking now at FIGS. 6-8, coring housing **20** comprises a proximal baseplate **85** mounted to (or formed integral with) distal end **30** of tube **10**. Baseplate **85** comprises an opening **90** (FIG. 7) sized to permit drill shaft **15** to pass therethrough. A circumferentially-extending sidewall **95** is mounted to baseplate **85** and extends distally therefrom, terminating in a distal cutting surface **100**. Sidewall **95** extends circumferentially about the perimeter of baseplate **85** and defines a cavity **105** sized to receive drill bit **65** therein, as will hereinafter be discussed in further detail. One or more windows **110** are preferably formed in sidewall **95** so as to communicate with cavity **105**, whereby to permit irrigation fluid and/or vacuum to be introduced into cavity **105** and/or to facilitate removal of a plug of tissue from cavity **105**, as will hereinafter be discussed in further detail.

(13) Still looking at FIGS. 6-8, drill bit **65** preferably comprises a plurality of cutting blades **115**. Cutting blades **115** each comprise a front cutting surface **120** disposed at an angle relative to the longitudinal axis of drill shaft **15**, and a rear surface **125** disposed generally parallel to the longitudinal axis of drill shaft **15**. In one preferred form of the invention, drill bit **65** comprises four cutting blades **115**, with the cutting blades **115** arranged such that the front cutting surface **120** of each cutting blade **115** is configured to cut tissue when drill bit **65** is rotated in a first (e.g., clockwise) direction relative to the tissue to be cored out. It will be appreciated that, as a result of the angle of front cutting surface **120** of each cutting blade **115**, as tissue is cut by the cutting blade **115**, the tissue removed is directed proximally back behind drill bit **65**, whereby to enter cavity **105** of coring housing **20**, whereupon the cut tissue can be expelled (or actively removed, e.g., via a vacuum) through the one or more windows **110** formed in sidewall **95**, as will hereinafter be discussed in further detail.

(14) In one preferred form of the present invention, a removable spacer **130** is releasably mounted to proximal end **55** of drill shaft **15** so as to prevent longitudinal movement of drill shaft **15**. More particularly, and looking now at FIG. 3, in a preferred form of the invention, spacer **130** is releasably mounted to proximal end **55** of drill shaft **15** so as to be captured between the distal end of handle **75** (or stop **70** of drill shaft **15**) and the proximal end of over grip **25**, whereby to prevent handle **75** (and hence, drill shaft **15** mounted thereto) from moving distally until spacer **130** is removed from drill shaft **15**.

(15) It will also be appreciated that drill shaft **15** is sized such that, when spacer **130** is removed, drill bit **65** mounted to distal end **50** of drill shaft **15** can be moved distally and proximally within cavity **105** of coring housing **20**. To this end, stop **70** on drill shaft **15** is configured to contact over grip **25** when drill shaft **15** is in its distalmost position, whereby to prevent further distal movement

of drill shaft **15**. In this way, cutting blades **115** of drill bit **65** will never extend distally beyond distal cutting surface **100** of sidewall **95** when drill shaft **15** is in its distalmost position.

(16) It should also be appreciated that, if desired, the outer surface of sidewall **95** of coring housing **20** may comprise indicia (not shown), e.g., a series of regularly spaced depth markings, to provide a visual reference to the surgeon for how far distal cutting surface **100** is advanced into tissue.

Exemplary Use of Surgical Coring Apparatus **5** to Effect Osteochondral Reconstruction

(17) In use, when a surgeon wishes to effect an osteochondral reconstruction using novel apparatus **5** of the present invention, the surgeon selects an apparatus **5** comprising a coring housing **20** sized and shaped to fit over a lesion that is to be removed. To this end, it should be appreciated that coring housing **20** is preferably provided in different geometries (e.g., oval, square, rectangular, etc.) and different sizes (e.g., so as to define a cavity **105** of different dimensions) so as to be sized and shaped for the lesion that is to be removed.

(18) Once the surgeon has selected an appropriately configured apparatus **5** to remove the lesion, the surgeon accesses the lesion that is to be removed (e.g., via an incision, a cannula, etc.) and moves apparatus **5** such that coring housing **20** is disposed over the lesion that is to be removed. With spacer **130** mounted to drill shaft **15**, the surgeon applies a distally-directed force to handle **75**. Since spacer **130** prevents distal movement of drill shaft **15**, the distally-directed force moves coring housing **20** distally such that distal cutting surface **100** of sidewall **95** engages and cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion that is to be removed. The surgeon may rotate apparatus **5** (e.g., by rotating over grip **25**) so as to help facilitate the cutting action of distal cutting surface **100**. If provided on the outer surface of sidewall **95**, the surgeon can use indicia markings (not shown) to determine how far distal cutting surface **100** has advanced into the tissue that is to be cored, whereby to determine when distal cutting surface **100** is disposed distally at the desired depth.

(19) Once distal cutting surface **100** has been inserted distally into the tissue to the correct depth, the surgeon removes spacer **130** and moves handle **75** distally, whereby to move drill shaft **15** (and hence, drill bit **65** mounted thereto) distally so as to engage and cut tissue within cavity **105** of coring housing. Once drill bit **65** has been moved distally a distance sufficient to engage tissue disposed within cavity **105** of coring housing **20**, the surgeon rotates handle **75**, whereby to rotate drill shaft **15** and drill bit **65**. As drill bit **65** rotates in a first direction (e.g., a clockwise direction), cutting blades **115** engage and cut tissue, with tissue being directed up along front cutting surface **120** into the area behind drill bit **65**. From this point, tissue can be removed by removing apparatus **5** from the body of the patient (carrying the tissue cored out within cavity **105**) where it is thereafter removed from cavity **105**, e.g., via prying it out using windows **110** to gain access or by applying a vacuum to suction the cored tissue from within cavity **105**.

(20) This results in a “plug” of tissue being cored out of the tissue, leaving a recess in the tissue having the shape of cavity **105** and extending from the surface of the tissue to the depth at which distal cutting surface **100** is disposed during cutting. Since the size and geometry of the recess cored out of the tissue matches the size and geometry of cavity **105** (as modified by the depth to which distal cutting surface **100** extends into the tissue), and since apparatus **5** is selected by the surgeon so as to precisely match the cellular graft, an osteochondral graft, or an allograft/autograft that is to be inserted into the recess that is formed, apparatus **5** provides a simple way to accurately form a recess in tissue that can receive the cellular graft, osteochondral graft, or allograft/autograft with which the surgeon wishes to repair the tissue. The cellular graft, osteochondral graft, or allograft/autograft is then inserted into the recess cored into the tissue and the osteochondral reconstruction procedure is complete.

(21) Although the above embodiments have been described in language that is specific to certain structures, elements, compositions, and methodological steps, it is to be understood that the technology defined in the appended claims is not necessarily limited to the specific structures, elements, compositions and/or steps described. Rather, the specific aspects and steps are described

as forms of implementing the claimed technology. Since many embodiments of the technology can be practiced without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention, the invention resides in the claims hereinafter appended.

Claims

1. A method for effecting osteochondral restoration, the method comprising: providing apparatus comprising: a tube having a distal end, a proximal end and a lumen extending therebetween; a drill shaft rotatably disposed in the lumen of the tube, the drill shaft comprising a distal end and a proximal end; at least one cutting blade disposed at the distal end of the drill shaft; and a coring housing extending from the distal end of the tube and disposed around the at least one cutting blade, the coring housing terminating in a distal cutting surface; placing the distal cutting surface over a lesion that is to be removed such that the lesion is bounded by the coring housing; applying a distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion; and without removing the distal cutting surface from the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion, moving the drill shaft distally and rotating the drill shaft such that the at least one cutting blade cuts into the tissue bounded by the coring housing, whereby to core out a cavity in the tissue comprising the lesion; wherein the apparatus further comprises a spacer removably mounted to the proximal end of the drill shaft with: a first configuration in which the spacer mounted to the drill shaft prevent the drill shaft from moving in a distal direction through the tube, and a second configuration in which the spacer removed from the drill shaft allows the drill shaft to move in the distal direction through the tube, and wherein the method further comprises providing the spacer mounted to the proximal end of the drill to prevent the drill shaft from moving in the distal direction through the tube during the step of applying the distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one cutting blade comprises a front cutting surface disposed at an angle relative to a longitudinal axis of the drill shaft, and a rear surface disposed generally parallel to the longitudinal axis of the drill shaft.
3. The method of claim 1, further comprising removing the spacer from the drill prior to moving the drill shaft distally to allow the drill shaft to move in the distal direction through the tube during the step of moving the drill shaft distally and rotating the drill shaft such that the at least one cutting blade cuts into the tissue bounded by the coring housing, whereby to core out a cavity in the tissue comprising the lesion.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of applying a distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion includes cutting the tissue comprising both cartilage and bone.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of applying a distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion includes cutting the tissue comprising a depth of cartilage through to bone without cutting into the bone.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of applying a distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion includes cutting the tissue comprising a depth of cartilage without cutting through the cartilage to bone.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein the apparatus further comprises a radially-extending stop mounted at a selected point along the drill shaft in a configuration to prevent the at least one cutting blade from moving beyond the distal cutting surface of the coring housing, and wherein the method further comprises (1) advancing the distal cutting surface to a given depth in the tissue during the step of applying the distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface, and (2) coring out the cavity in the tissue proximal of, or to, the given depth of the distal cutting surface as limited by the radially-extending stop.

8. A method for effecting osteochondral restoration, the method comprising: providing apparatus comprising: a tube having a distal end, a proximal end and a lumen extending therebetween; a drill shaft rotatably disposed in the lumen of the tube, the drill shaft comprising a distal end and a proximal end; at least one cutting blade disposed at the distal end of the drill shaft; a coring housing extending from the distal end of the tube and disposed around the at least one cutting blade, the coring housing terminating in a distal cutting surface; and a radially-extending stop mounted at a selected point along the drill shaft in a configuration to prevent the at least one cutting blade from moving beyond the distal cutting surface of the coring housing; placing the distal cutting surface over a lesion that is to be removed such that the lesion is bounded by the coring housing; applying a distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion; and moving the drill shaft distally and rotating the drill shaft such that the at least one cutting blade cuts into the tissue bounded by the coring housing, without moving beyond the distal cutting surface of the coring housing as prevented by the radially-extending stop, whereby to core out a cavity in the tissue comprising the lesion; wherein the apparatus further comprises a spacer removably mounted to the proximal end of the drill shaft with: a first configuration in which the spacer mounted to the drill shaft prevent the drill shaft from moving in a distal direction through the tube, and a second configuration in which the spacer removed from the drill shaft allows the drill shaft to move in the distal direction through the tube, and wherein the method further comprises providing the spacer mounted to the proximal end of the drill to prevent the drill shaft from moving in the distal direction through the tube during the step of applying the distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion.

9. The method of claim 8, further comprising removing the spacer from the drill prior to moving the drill shaft distally to allow the drill shaft to move in the distal direction through the tube during the step of moving the drill shaft distally and rotating the drill shaft such that the at least one cutting blade cuts into the tissue bounded by the coring housing, whereby to core out a cavity in the tissue comprising the lesion.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of applying a distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion includes cutting the tissue comprising both cartilage and bone.

11. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of applying a distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion includes cutting the tissue comprising a depth of cartilage through to bone without cutting into the bone.

12. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of applying a distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion includes cutting the tissue comprising a depth of cartilage without cutting through the cartilage to bone.

13. A method for effecting osteochondral restoration, the method comprising: providing apparatus comprising: a tube having a distal end, a proximal end and a lumen extending therebetween; a drill shaft rotatably disposed in the lumen of the tube, the drill shaft comprising a distal end and a proximal end; at least one cutting blade disposed at the distal end of the drill shaft; a coring housing extending from the distal end of the tube and disposed around the at least one cutting blade, the coring housing terminating in a distal cutting surface; and a radially-extending stop mounted at a selected point along the drill shaft in a configuration to prevent the at least one cutting blade from moving beyond the distal cutting surface of the coring housing; placing the distal cutting surface over a lesion that is to be removed such that the lesion is bounded by the coring housing; applying a distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface to advance the distal cutting surface by cutting into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion to a given depth in tissue surrounding the perimeter of the lesion; and without removing the distal cutting surface from the

tissue around the perimeter of the lesion, moving the drill shaft distally and rotating the drill shaft such that the at least one cutting blade cuts into the tissue bounded by the coring housing, whereby to core out a cavity in the tissue comprising the lesion proximal of, or to, the given depth of the distal cutting surface as limited by the radially-extending stop; wherein the apparatus further comprises a spacer removably mounted to the proximal end of the drill shaft with: a first configuration in which the spacer mounted to the drill shaft prevent the drill shaft from moving in a distal direction through the tube, and a second configuration in which the spacer removed from the drill shaft allows the drill shaft to move in the distal direction through the tube, and wherein the method further comprises providing the spacer mounted to the proximal end of the drill to prevent the drill shaft from moving in the distal direction through the tube during the step of applying the distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion.

14. The method of claim 13, further comprising removing the spacer from the drill prior to moving the drill shaft distally to allow the drill shaft to move in the distal direction through the tube during the step of moving the drill shaft distally and rotating the drill shaft such that the at least one cutting blade cuts into the tissue bounded by the coring housing, whereby to core out a cavity in the tissue comprising the lesion.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein the step of applying a distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion includes cutting the tissue comprising both cartilage and bone.

16. The method of claim 13, wherein the step of applying a distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion includes cutting the tissue comprising a depth of cartilage through to bone without cutting into the bone.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein the step of applying a distally-directed force to the distal cutting surface such that the cutting surface cuts into the tissue around the perimeter of the lesion includes cutting the tissue comprising a depth of cartilage without cutting through the cartilage to bone.
