

Felicity Age 26



I had been struggling with knee problems for as long as I remember. From a very young age when my knee was bent further than 90° it would lock. Usually if I kicked out hard it would pop back in. I never knew what it was but my dad and my sister had the same problem. When I was 18 during a sailing event my knee locked and would not unlock again. I went to the hospital and they couldn't find what was causing the problem. An X-ray showed that there were no bone fragments locking the joint. I was then booked in for a MRI, but could not have it until my knee was straight again.

My knee unlocked itself about a week and a half later and the MRI showed no issue. I returned to sailing but the problem quickly occurred again and didn't unlock for about a month, it was then that some family friends recommended Matt Dawson to me. Matt discussed with me what could be causing the problem, although he would not be able to tell for definite without an arthroscopy. He explained to me that I may have hypermobile cartilage which was rare and should not be hereditary. I had an arthroscopy on my knee a couple of weeks later, which showed he was correct and my cartilage moving to become trapped in the space between my patella and tibia causing the problem.

During the arthroscopy Matt had put some stitches in the cartilage to hold it in place but unfortunately this did not fix it for long. When I went back to Matt again he suggested to me an osteotomy. I was slightly knock-kneed which was causing a larger gap for the cartilage to move in to. The osteotomy would straighten my leg reducing this gap. It seemed like quite an extreme operation but Matt made me feel very safe and said it would reduce the likelihood of needing a knee replacement.

The surgery itself went very smoothly and I was back home the next day. I followed all the instructions for my recovery and was comfortably back walking very quickly. My scar from the operation is extremely neat and I had very little discomfort. The operation itself did not completely fix the problem but did stop my knee locking, instead it would just catch. I have since had another operation to hold the cartilage in place and this seems to have stabilised it.

Before having these operations I had been told that if my knee continued to lock the way it was I would need to have a knee replacement within a couple of years and it would be unlikely that I would be able to walk past the age of 30. I was very active when I was young and my knee issues had begun to reduce what activities I could do.

After my operation I went back working as a Sailing Instructor in the summer and as a Ski Rep in the winter. I have since returned to work in the UK but I am still sailing competitively and skiing on a regular basis. I am extremely pleased with the result of my osteotomy. I feel I have my life back and I do not have any of the limitations that I had before.