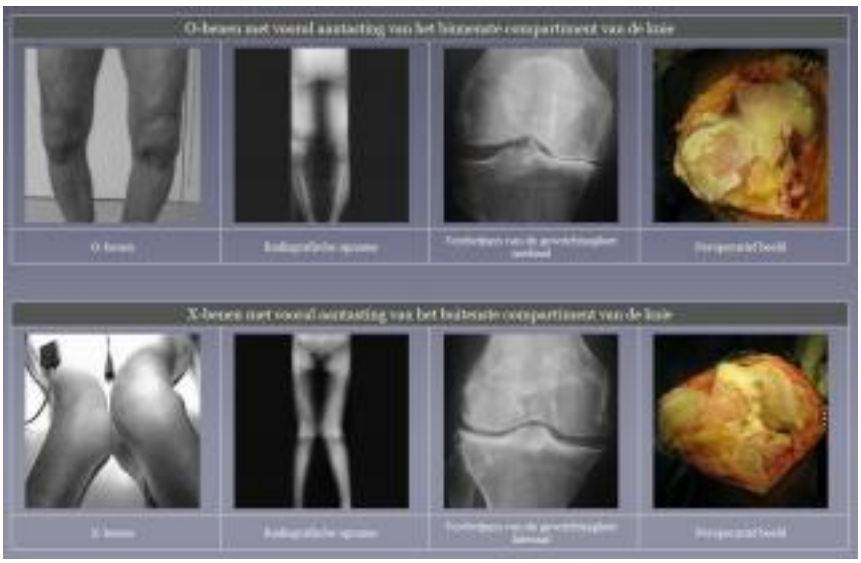




The wear process or osteoarthritis of the knee usually starts around the age of 55-60 years. This process gives rise to pain when walking, and can eventually lead to pain at rest. As a result of wearing out the cartilage, some change in curvature of the leg can gradually occur: an O-leg or an X-leg develops. Consequently, this leads to more gait difficulties. Over time, the patient with knee osteoarthritis will only be able to move himself with the aid of a walking stick or crutches.

Osteoarthritis of the knee joint is clearly visible on radiographic photographs. The damaged cartilage becomes thinner until finally nothing remains: the joint gap narrows until it is no longer visible on the radiography: the bony ends touch each other.