Supplementary file 1:

Flow diagram of the patients in the randomized controlled trial from baseline to 5-year follow-up including reasons for drop-outs at all timepoints. K-L score: Kellgren-Lawrence grade. KOOS: The average score for the Knee injury and Osteoarthritis Outcome Score subscales for pain, symptoms, function of daily living (ADL), and quality of life. KR: Knee replacement

Assessed for eligibility in trial of patients not eligible for KR (n=654)

Excluded (n=553)
- Eligible for KR (n=192)
- K-L grade < 1 (n=87)
- Aged < 18 years (n=26)
- KOOS > 75 (n=22)
- Previous same side knee replacement (n=44)
- Rheumatoid Arthritis (n=11)
- VAS > 60mm out of 100 mm (n=12)
- Unable to comply with study protocol (n=159)

Eligible for inclusion (n=101)

Unwilling to be randomised (n=1)

Randomized (n=100)

Allocated to non-surgical treatment (n=50)
- Received the allocated treatment (n=48)
- Did not want the treatment anyway (n=2)

Allocated to written advice (n=50)
- Received the allocated treatment (n=50)

Follow-Up

Attended 1-year follow-up (n=47)
- Did not attend (n=3)
  - No longer interested (n=1)
  - Cancelled and not possible to reach (n=1)
  - Had died (n=1)

Attended 1-year follow-up (n=44)
- Did not attend (n=6)
  - No longer interested (n=2)
  - Cancelled and not possible to reach (n=2)
  - Had died (n=1)
  - Personal or health issues (n=1)
Attended 2-year follow-up (n=46)
  Did not attend (n=4)
    No longer interested (n=1)
    Cancelled and not possible to reach (n=2)
    Had died (n=1)

Attended 5-year follow-up (n=39)
  Did not attend (n=11)
    No longer interested (n=2)
    Cancelled and not possible to reach (n=5)
    Had died (n=4)
  Underwent joint replacement surgery during follow-up (n=15)

Attended 2-year follow-up (n=42)
  Did not attend (n=8)
    No longer interested (n=5)
    Cancelled and not possible to reach (n=1)
    Had died (n=1)
    Had moved to another country (n=1)

Attended 5-year follow-up (n=36)
  Did not attend (n=14)
    No longer interested (n=8)
    Cancelled and not possible to reach (n=2)
    Had died (n=4)
  Underwent joint replacement surgery during follow-up (n=17)

Included in the intention-to-treat analysis (n=50)