



## Artificial knee supports Smith & Nephew profits

**Andrew Clark**

A ground-breaking artificial knee has put a spring in the step of health care company Smith & Nephew, which yesterday produced a 44% surge in annual pre-tax profits to £261m.

The increase was partly due to one-off gains on the sale of consumer businesses, including Elastoplast dressings.

However, Smith & Nephew's ongoing performance was buoyed by its Genesis "total knee replacement system", which allows surgeons to fit together a different type of knee for each patient. Genesis has become the firm's first orthopaedics product to produce sales of \$100m (£70m).

Chief executive Chris O'Donnell said: "It has become the leading knee replacement sys-

tem. We've made it easier and faster to put new knees in."

More than 46,000 patients require new knees each year in Britain. Older, arthritic patients often require extra support to correct bow legs while younger people need greater mobility. The Genesis system allows surgeons to adapt components to suit each case.

Smith & Nephew has been through a complicated deal with German rival Beiersdorf, in which it has withdrawn from consumer products and acquired extra wound care technology.

The company is awaiting approval from the US Food and Drug Administration for Dermagraft, a dressing for diabetic foot ulcers made from the discarded foreskins of circumcised babies.