

## Osmotic forces in cartilaginous tissues

***Citation for published version (APA):***

Huyghe, J. M. R. J., & Roos, R. W. (2010). Osmotic forces in cartilaginous tissues. In *US Congress on Theoretical and Applied Mechanics* (pp. 0-).

***Document status and date:***

Published: 01/01/2010

***Document Version:***

Accepted manuscript including changes made at the peer-review stage

***Please check the document version of this publication:***

- A submitted manuscript is the version of the article upon submission and before peer-review. There can be important differences between the submitted version and the official published version of record. People interested in the research are advised to contact the author for the final version of the publication, or visit the DOI to the publisher's website.
- The final author version and the galley proof are versions of the publication after peer review.
- The final published version features the final layout of the paper including the volume, issue and page numbers.

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Abstract submitted to the USCTAM, july 2010.

## Osmotic forces in cartilaginous tissues

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Cartilaginous tissues are charged porous media saturated with a fluid of opposite charge. As a result of this, the stress in the tissue depends on the local ionic concentration, which in turn depends on boundary conditions, water content ionisation and external load. Different models have been proposed for the relationship between stress and ionic concentration. Donnan osmosis has been shown to be an oversimplified model to cover the full complexity of the cartilaginous behaviour. Chemical stress, chemical expansion stress and intrafibrillar water are a few mechanisms that have been proposed in the literature. The relative contribution of each of these mechanisms will be discussed on the basis of thermodynamic considerations and experiments. These experiments are performed not only on cartilaginous tissues but also on model materials mimicking some but not all of these mechanisms. Implications for mechanotransduction of the extracellular matrix will be presented.