

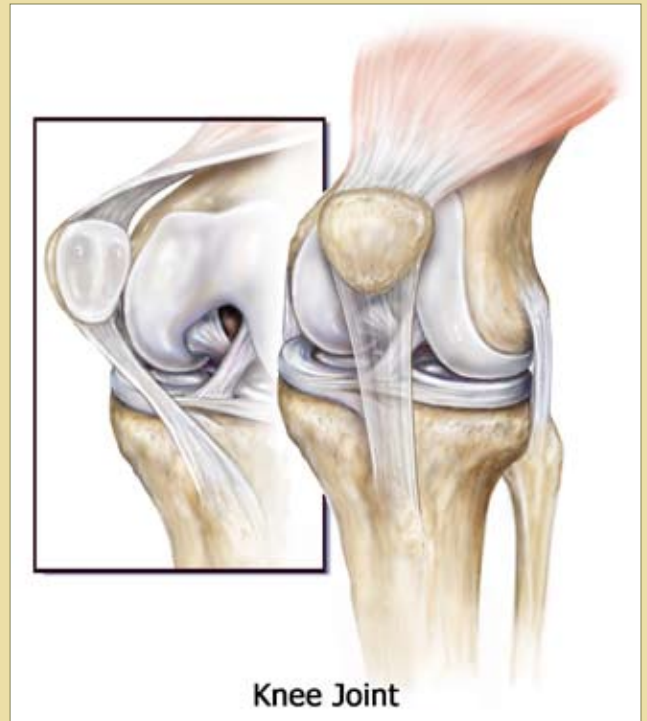


Understanding the Knee

Anatomy

The knee is comprised of various muscles, ligaments, cartilage and tendons. The four major ligaments are the Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL), the Posterior Cruciate Ligament (PCL), the Medial Collateral Ligament (MCL) and Lateral Collateral Ligament (LCL). These four ligaments act collectively to support the knee.

There are two main muscle groups which are responsible for moving the knee. The quadriceps and hamstrings act in concert to move the knee into extension and flexion, respectively. An imbalance in the strength and flexibility of these muscles can make you susceptible to injury. Conversely, the correct balance of strength and flexibility in these muscles can protect the knee and prevent injury.



Knee Joint

The menisci are located inside the knee joint, between the femur (thigh bone) and tibia (shin bone). They cushion the knee and prevent bone on bone rubbing that leads to arthritis. In general, the menisci lack a sufficient blood supply to heal properly on their own. Therefore, it is necessary to remove any torn or damaged tissue within the meniscus, should it become painful.

Symptoms for a knee injury are diverse in presentation and severity. The following should only be thought of as a generalization of the symptoms associated with this disorder.

Symptoms

Pain, swelling, instability, painful clicking and/or popping, stiffness and a loss of motion are all symptoms consistent with a knee injury. Some patients will have only a few of these symptoms while others may have several.

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