

Treating Knee Pain

Specific Treatments for Knee Injuries

Chondromalacia

Many doctors recommend that patients with chondromalacia perform low-impact exercises that strengthen muscles, without injuring joints (swimming, cycling, walking).

At times a physician may perform arthroscopic surgery to smooth the surface of the articular cartilage and clean and smooth out cartilage fragments that rub on the surface of the femur.

Meniscus Tear

If the tear is minor and the pain and other symptoms go away, the doctor may recommend a visit to a Physical Therapist for a muscle-strengthening program. If the tear to a meniscus is more extensive, arthroscopic surgery may be performed. The meniscus can be repaired in some cases. If the tear is more extensive, a small piece may be removed to even the surface. In some cases, the doctor removes the entire meniscus. However, degenerative changes, such as osteoarthritis, are more likely to develop in the knee if the meniscus is removed. Researchers are developing procedures that may replace a meniscus in the near future.

Cruciate Ligament Tears

For an incomplete CL tear, a doctor may recommend a visit to a Physical Therapist to strengthen surrounding muscles. A knee brace may also be warranted. If the ACL is completely torn, surgery may be indicated. The torn ends of the ligament may be reattached or completely reconstructed with a graft.

Medial Collateral Ligament

Most sprains of the collateral ligaments will heal if the patient follows a prescribed exercise program, including R.I.C.E. and bracing.

Osteoarthritis

Most often osteoarthritis of the knee is treated with analgesics such as aspirin or acetaminophen, and anti-inflammatories, such as ibuprofen (Motrin, Nuprin, Advil). Exercises may be warranted to strengthen the knee, as well as encourage weight loss.

Knee Tendon Injuries

Tendonitis is typically treated with R.I.C.E. and ibuprofen to relieve pain and decrease inflammation and swelling. If the tendon is completely ruptured, surgery is necessary to reattach the tendon.

Iliotibial Band Syndrome

Usually, iliotibial band syndrome eases with reduced activity. Strengthening and stretching exercises can also alleviate the IT band pain.