

ACL TEAR



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WHAT IS IT?

A partial or full tear of the anterior cruciate ligament. ACL restricts anterior translation of the knee. Tears can be caused by both contact and non-contact mechanisms.



ANATOMY

Attaches to the medial tibial plateau and traverses superior and lateral to the medial portion of the lateral femoral condyle. Other structures that can be involved/injured: tibial plateau, meniscus, MCL, PCL



SPECIAL TESTS

- Lachman
- Anterior Drawer Test
- Observe presentation: joint effusion, pain, guarding, increased laxity, feeling of instability
- Imaging: MRI (gold standard), X-Ray

DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS

- Meniscal injury
- Injury to MCL, PCL, LCL



TREATMENT EXAMPLES



- Copers (non-surgical) vs non-copers (surgical)
 - Majority non-copers
 - Graft type: patellar tendon, hamstring tendon, cadaver
- Non-coper treatment
 - Restore ROM
 - Lower quarter strengthening
 - Hop and limb symmetry testing
 - Goal: >90/95% symmetry compared to non-involved before returning to sport

EXAMPLE QUESTION

An athlete reports being hit on the lateral aspect of their knee while playing football. They report a pop and immediate joint swelling. This patient has an MRI scheduled for tomorrow.

What special tests could help to determine a potential ACL injury?

1. McMurray
2. Posterior Drawer
3. Anterior Drawer
4. Lachman

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Answer: anterior drawer