



Common Sense in Medicine

This information is based on patient interaction of over twenty-five years in the Dallas office of Dr. David Hubler M.D. Board Certified Orthopedic Surgeon

Knee Ligaments

The knee has four major ligaments supporting it. The knee is like a hinge. It bends and straightens. There are two ligaments, one on each side of the knee that limits sideway movement. These are the medial and lateral collateral ligaments. The lateral ligament is rarely injured, but the medial one, the MCL is frequently torn or stretched. This happens when the knee is forced toward the other knee, but the foot does not move. The knee then bends sideways and injures the MCL.

Clipping injuries in football frequently tear this ligament. It can also be torn when the feet are widely spaced and the body weight moves sideways. The knee swells and there is usually tenderness at the joint level or just above or below it.

This ligament usually heals well but should be protected in a knee immobilizer or cast for the six weeks it takes to heal. During this time the patient can do certain exercises carefully to keep his muscles strong without further damaging the ligament.

The other two ligaments

limit forward and backward movement. These are the anterior cruciate ligament or ACL and the posterior cruciate ligament or PCL. The PCL is rarely injured, but the ACL is frequently injured in basketball, baseball or football when a runner changes direction and twists his knee.

Often a pop is hurt when this happens. Because the ACL does not heal if torn, treatment is to reconstruct it using a graft or do special exercises to train the muscles to function like the ACL. If surgery is chosen, it is a day surgery and the patient uses a knee brace rather than crutches. Exercises are started right away, but competitive sports are limited for about six months.

Ligament injuries used to be devastating, but with our advanced techniques, people can now return to their sports.

**Knee Ligament Injuries
By David Hubler MD**

**Dr. Hubler's office is in
The 520 Building
520 North Monte Vista Suite C
Ada, Oklahoma, 74820
580-421-9900
www.AGoodDoctor.com**