

# Knee Trauma

## EXPERT ADVICE

### Prevention

“Some knee problems caused by athletics are preventable, especially the chronic overuse types. Off-season strength training and conditioning is important, and so is managing fatigue. Injuries increase as the athlete gets fatigued, so managing fatigue, ensuring adequate preparation, and listening to stress responses can help avoid knee injuries. The body can adapt to almost anything if you give it enough time. Where we get into trouble is when athletes have sport schedules that don't coordinate with the body's physiology. Have realistic expectations for the physiology of the body and allow enough time to adapt and you can reduce the likelihood of injury.”



**Brett Sanders, M.D., Orthopaedic Surgeon,**  
Center for Sports Medicine and Orthopaedics



**Acute vs. Chronic Knee Injuries**  
Acute knee injuries have a sudden onset and include sprains, strains, and tears to ligaments, tendons, or cartilage. Chronic knee injuries tend to come from activities with repetitive movements. Two examples of chronic knee injuries are runner's knee and jumper's knee, which are injuries of the kneecap caused by excessive jumping or friction.

**D**id you know the knee is the largest joint in the body? Made up of bones, cartilage, ligaments, and tendons, the knee offers plenty of opportunity for injury.

**Fractures** A fracture is a crack or break in a bone. Fractures of the knee occur from high-energy trauma such as collisions or falls. *Symptoms: severe pain, tenderness, swelling, limited range of motion, grating bone ends, misshapen leg*

**Dislocation** When a bone in the knee is out of place, it's known as dislocation. High-energy trauma is one of the main causes for knee dislocation. *Symptoms: visibly deformed or bent knee, intense pain, swolleness, discoloration, immobility*

**ACL Injuries** The anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) is often torn in sports injuries in which the player changes direction rapidly or lands incorrectly. *Symptoms: feeling or hearing a "pop," sudden instability, pain, sudden swelling*

**Posterior Cruciate Ligament Injuries** This type of injury occurs from a blow to the front of a bended knee. Often it is only a partial tear that can heal on its own. *Symptoms: swelling (mild to severe), knee pain, wobbly sensation in the knee, trouble walking or bearing weight on the knee*

**Collateral Ligament Injury** A force that pushes the knee sideways is a common cause for this injury. Although rare, this injury is caused by a blow to the inside or outside of the knee which pushes it in the opposite direction. *Symptoms: popping and buckling, pain, swelling, redness, warmth, instability, difficulty walking*

**Meniscal and Tendon Tears** Meniscus tears occur from swift knee movements such as twisting or pivoting. Tendons in the knee can be stretched and torn from an awkward land or direct force. *Symptoms: pain, stiffness and swelling, instability, bruising, tenderness, cramping, inability to straighten knee, sagging kneecap, indentation at top of kneecap* +

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AUGUST 23 - NOVEMBER 8, 2014



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