Torn meniscus

Also called: tear of meniscus

A common injury in which forceful twisting causes certain tissue in the knee to tear.

- Treatable by a medical professional
- Requires a medical diagnosis
- Lab tests or imaging often required
- Medium-term: resolves within months

A meniscus tear occurs in the rubbery knee cartilage that cushions the shinbone from the thighbone. The meniscus can tear with forceful twisting or rotation of the knee.

Pain, swelling, stiffness and difficulty extending the knee are symptoms. Treatment includes rest, ice, pain relievers and physiotherapy. Less commonly, surgery may be required.

Symptoms

Requires a medical diagnosis

Pain, swelling, stiffness and difficulty extending the knee are symptoms.

People may experience:

- Pain areas: in the knee
- Also common: swollen knee, limited range of motion, limping, or stiffness

Treatments

Treatment consists of anti-inflammatories and self care

Treatment includes rest, ice, pain relievers and physiotherapy. Less commonly, surgery may be required.

Therapies

- Stretching: Stretching exercises can improve flexibility and improve physical function.
- Physical Therapy: Restores muscle strength and function through exercise.

Self-care

- RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation): Rest, ice, compression and elevation. A first-aid treatment for sprains and strains.
- Physical exercise: Aerobic activity for 20–30 minutes 5 days a week improves cardiovascular health. If injured, pursuing an activity that avoids the injured muscle group or joint can help maintain physical function while recovering.

Medications

- Nonsteroidal anti-Inflammatory drug: Relieves pain, decreases inflammation and reduces fever.
**Analgesic:** Relieves pain.

**Surgery**

**Arthroscopy:** Procedure to diagnose and treat joint problems using a tiny camera inserted through a small surgical opening.

**Specialists**

**Orthopaedic Surgeon:** Performs surgery for conditions affecting bones and muscles.

**Sports Medicine:** Treats and prevents sports and exercise injuries.

**General Practitioner (GP):** Prevents, diagnoses and treats diseases.

Consult a doctor for medical advice

Note: The information you see describes what usually happens with a medical condition, but doesn't apply to everyone. This information isn't medical advice, so make sure that you contact a health care provider if you have a medical problem. If you think you may have a medical emergency, call your doctor or an emergency number immediately.

**Sources:** Mayo Clinic and others. Learn more