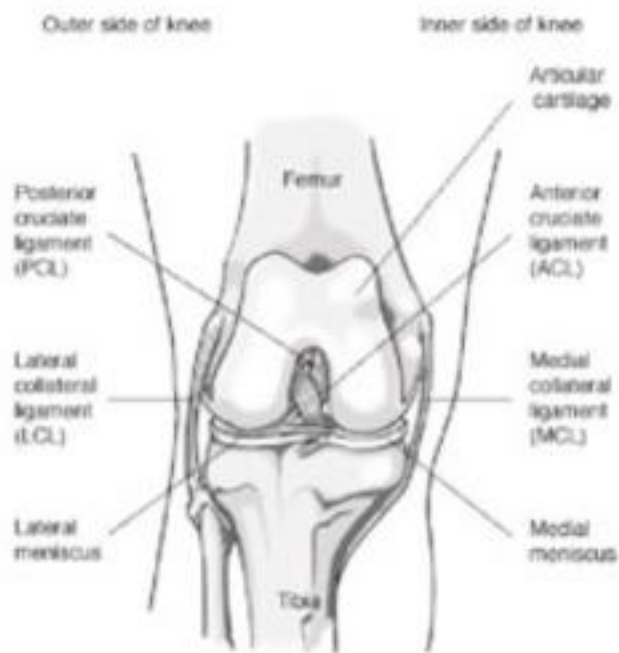


What is a Meniscal Tear?

What is the meniscus?

The meniscus is one of the most commonly injured parts of the knee. It is a wedge-like cushion located in the knee where the major bones of the leg connect. It acts as a strong stabilizing tissue and allows the knee joint to carry weight, glide and turn in different directions. The meniscus keeps your femur (thighbone) and tibia (shinbone) from grinding together.



Symptoms of a meniscal tear may include:

- Stiffening and swelling of the joint
- Tenderness of the joint
- Catching or locking of the knee
- Buckling of the knee

Injuries of this tissue may result from an acute trauma to the knee, by twisting, pivoting, cutting or decelerating. The meniscus can also be injured without any acute trauma, since the tissue gradually weakens and wears thin over time. Diagnosis of this injury involves physical examination as well as imaging studies, such as an X-ray or MRI, to rule out osteoarthritis and examine the soft tissue of the joint. Tears of the meniscus are commonly associated with tears of the ACL.

Non-surgical treatments

Non-surgical treatments typically include rest, ice, compression and elevation combined with anti-inflammatory medications for pain. These treatments have proven effective, since the blood vessels feeding the outer edges of the meniscus allow your body to heal itself on its own. However, if your knee does not heal on its own and remains painful, stiff or locked, arthroscopic surgery will be recommended. During surgery, the doctor will trim off damaged pieces of cartilage.