

# TAKING CARE OF YOUR KNEES

## THE “BAD KNEE”

Injuries of the knee can be grouped into two categories: **acute macro-traumatic** or injuries that result from a single event; and **micro-traumatic**, repetitive injuries that occur over time.

## TREATMENT OF KNEE INJURIES

Physical therapy



- Maximum protection, a series of exercises designed to help motion and decrease pain
- Improvement in movement pattern and alignment on attaining proper alignment of the knee and decreasing stress on this joint
- Return to function, an exercise sequence to restore strength

Surgery



- Surgery is indicated when:
- Repair is needed for ruptured ligaments or torn menisci
  - Some level of disability accompanies injury

## A PHYSICAL THERAPIST’S PERSPECTIVE

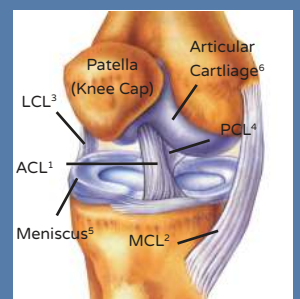
### THE KNEE JOINT

- TWO JOINTS: THE PATELLO FEMORAL JOINT, WHERE THE LARGE BONE OF THE UPPER LEG CONNECTS WITH THE KNEE CAP
- TIBIO-FEMORAL JOINT, WHERE THE UPPER LEG BONE HINGES WITH THE LARGE BONE OF THE LOWER LEG

### ANATOMY OF THE KNEE:

**THE KNEE IS REQUIRED TO DO A COMPLICATED JOB—TO PROVIDE FLEXIBLE MOBILITY WHILE BEARING CONSIDERABLE WEIGHT.**

WHEN THE KNEE IS OVERSTRESSED, THE COMPACT STRUCTURES OF BONE AND CARTILAGE CAN BREAK DOWN—AND KNEE INJURY OCCURS.



<sup>1</sup>PCL—Posterior Cruciate Ligament  
<sup>2</sup>Meniscus—cartilage that absorbs shock  
<sup>3</sup>Articular Cartilage—lines bones and cushions joint

<sup>4</sup>ACL—Anterior Cruciate Ligament. Ligaments provide stability to a joint by limiting certain motions.  
<sup>5</sup>MCL—Medial Collateral Ligament  
<sup>6</sup>LCL—Lateral Collateral Ligament

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## Preventing Knee Injury

Your knees' tolerance for stressful activities will decrease with age and loss of conditioning. But there are things you can do to prevent injury so you can continue to enjoy sports and exercise.



The first step in designing your exercise program is an evaluation by a physical therapist, who can identify your predisposing factor.



Based on this assessment, your physical therapist can design a program that will gain your optimum level of strength and conditioning.



## HOW PHYSICAL THERAPY CAN HELP

### PHYSICAL THERAPIST ROLE

- THINK OF YOUR PHYSICAL THERAPIST AS A COACH TO LEAD YOU THROUGH A COURSE ACTION TOWARD ACHIEVING YOUR GOALS FOR YOUR COMFORT AND LIFESTYLE
- PROMOTE ABILITY TO MOVE, REDUCE PAIN, RESTORE FUNCTION, AND PREVENT DISABILITY

### PROFESSIONALS

- DIAGNOSE AND MANAGE INDIVIDUALS OF ALL AGES WHO HAVE MEDICAL PROBLEMS
- EXAMINE EACH INDIVIDUAL AND DEVELOP A PLAN

### PHYSICAL THERAPIST SKILLS

- WHETHER YOU'RE CURRENTLY SUFFERING FROM A NEW INJURY, OR TRYING TO AVOID ONE, YOUR PHYSICAL THERAPIST HAS THE SKILLS TO HELP
- IT STARTS WITH A CAREFUL EVALUATION

### ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

- WORK WITH INDIVIDUALS TO PREVENT THE LOSS OF MOBILITY BY DEVELOPING FITNESS AND WELLNESS-ORIENTED PROGRAMS

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