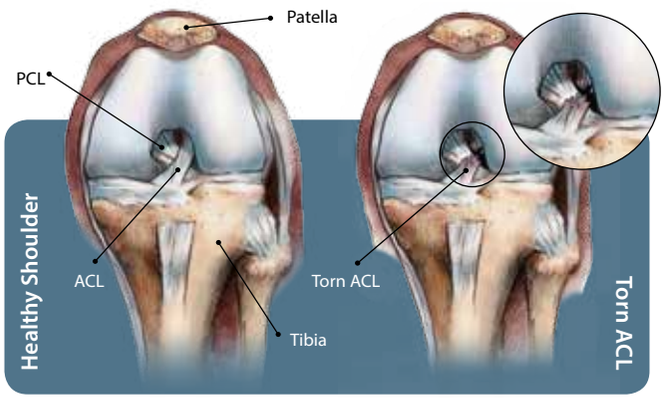
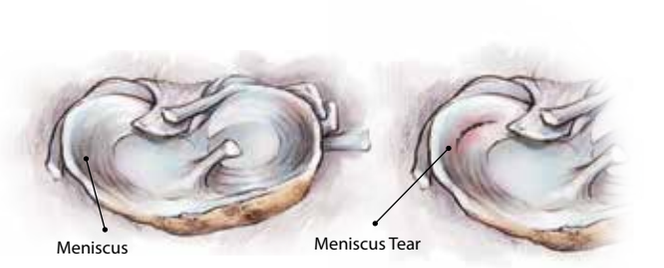
Knee: Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) Tear

The anterior cruciate ligament, or ACL, is one of the four major knee ligaments. The ACL is critical to knee stability, and people who injure their ACL often hear a loud pop or complain of symptoms of their knee giving–out from under them. Many patients who sustain an ACL tear may opt to have surgical reconstruction of the ligament, which is most commonly performed arthroscopically.



Meniscus Tear

The menisci are small, semi–circular pieces of cartilage that act as a cushion in the knee. The knee has both an inner and outer meniscus. Treatment varies depending upon the extent and location of the tear; however, a large meniscus tear that causes pain or limits knee function may require arthroscopic surgery for repair. Surgeons often refer to this as "debriding" or "smoothing over" the tear.



Healthy Knee **Meniscus Tear**

Complications

Few complications are to be expected with arthroscopy surgery. Those that may occur are infection, blood clot formation, swelling or bleeding, or damage to blood vessels or nerves.

After Surgery

Arthroscopic surgery rarely takes more than an hour or two for isolated injuries. Most patients who have arthroscopic surgery are discharged within the same day. The small skin incision wounds take several days to heal. Several follow–up appointments may be necessary.

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understanding

Arthroscopic Surgery

A shoulder or knee injury can potentially affect every aspect of a person's life, especially an athlete who may be prohibited from participating in a sport. Arthroscopic surgery may be an option to help people return to daily activities like walking, driving or standing or a sport involving throwing, kicking or swimming.

This brochure will help you understand arthroscopic surgery and the different injuries that can be treated with this type of surgery. This brochure is for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace the expert guidance of your orthopedic surgeon. Any questions or concerns you may have should be directed to your orthopedic surgeon.

What is Arthroscopic Surgery?

Arthroscopy is a technique that allows surgeons to visualize, diagnose and treat a variety of joint problems. Rotator cuff tears, ligament tears, meniscal tears, damaged and loose cartilage, and many other conditions can all be treated arthroscopically.

Arthroscopy is performed using an arthroscope, a small optic instrument that enables a close look at the inside of a joint through a small skin incision, which enables the patient to make a quick recovery. It was developed as a way to avoid making long skin incisions.

Procedure

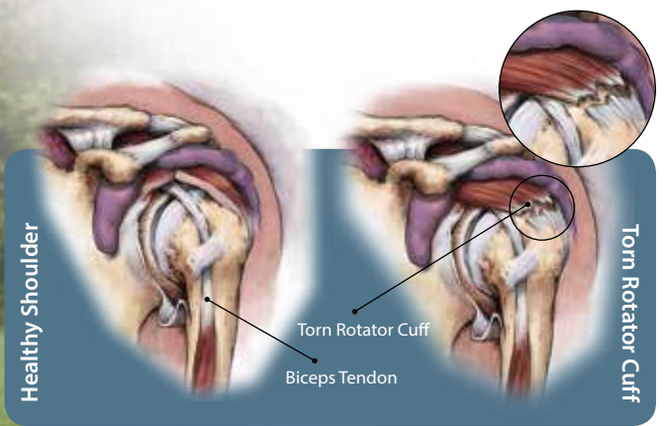
A small tube-like instrument (arthroscope) is inserted into the joint through a short incision generally less than ¼"–½". Several small incisions may be made to see other parts of the joint or to insert instruments. The arthroscope uses a camera that projects the image of the joint onto a monitor. Once the problem is identified, the surgeon may be able to use specially designed instruments and/or implantable fixation devices to repair conditions or remove any damaged bone or tissue.

Diagnosis & Treatment

The following are some of the conditions a surgeon may diagnose or treat arthroscopically.

Shoulder: Rotator Cuff Tear

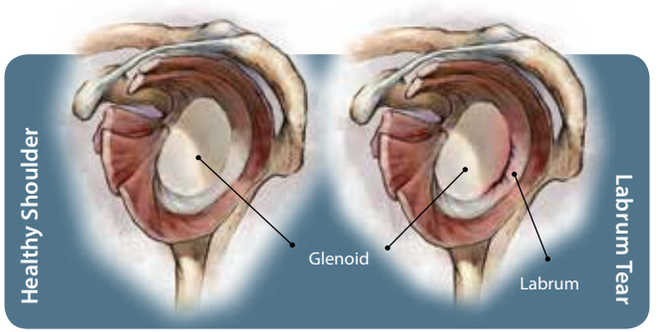
Rotator cuff tears include injury to muscles and tendons that connect the upper arm bone (humerus) to the shoulder blade (scapula). These tears occur in many shapes and sizes. If the injury is an incomplete or partial tear, pain may likely be the most prominent symptom. A complete rotator cuff tear may cause significant weakness and pain.



Labral Tear

The labrum is a soft ring of cartilage that surrounds the shoulder socket (glenoid). The shoulder labrum is an anchor for the ligaments that hold the bones together in the joint. A labral tear may occur due to injury, overuse or when the shoulder dislocates (comes out of the socket). Two types of labral tears include the SLAP lesion (Superior Labrum from Anterior to Posterior) and Bankart tears.

Patients with a labral tear may experience pain and catching in the shoulder. Labral surgery may be indicated in patients with persistent symptoms who fail a course of exercise and other conservative measures.



Biceps Tendon Tear

The biceps tendon attaches the biceps muscles to the shoulder, providing leverage for lower arm movement. Tears or ruptures of the biceps tendon can occur from lifting heavy objects, falling on an outstretched arm or playing contact sports. A torn biceps tendon causes pain and swelling.