

## KNEE ARTHROSCOPY

### What is wrong with my knee?

The meniscus is a pad of cartilage in the middle of your knee. Cartilage is a rubbery tissue that cushions the knee joint. You have a meniscus on the inner side of your knee (the medial meniscus) and a meniscus on the outer side of the knee (the lateral meniscus). Each meniscus attaches to the top of the shinbone (tibia) and acts as a shock absorber during weight-bearing activities. If a meniscus tears, it can cause knee pain, swelling, and can limit motion.

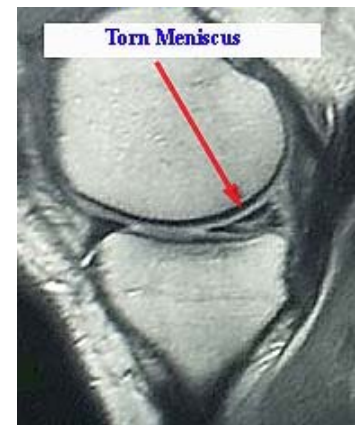


### What causes a meniscus tear?

A meniscus tear usually occurs from a twisting, pivoting, or squatting maneuver. Athletes participating in cutting and pivoting sports such as soccer, basketball, and football are at increased risk for tearing their meniscus. As we get older, the meniscus can tear from relatively minor trauma.

### How is a meniscus tear diagnosed?

Patients with a meniscus tear, usually complain of pain with activity and popping or locking of the knee. On examination, many patients will have swelling in their knee joint (effusion), tenderness over the medial or lateral joint, and pain with twisting of the knee. An MRI is usually confirms the diagnosis of meniscus tear.



### How is a meniscus tear treated?

Initial treatment may consist of rest, ice, and elevation. However, most young active patients will require surgery. Older patients can modify their activities, try a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory such as ibuprofen or aleve, and consider a cortisone injection. Cortisone is a steroid anti-inflammatory that is injected directly into the knee joint.

## What happens if I need surgery?

Most young active patients will require surgery. Older patients may elect to have surgery when non-operative treatment fails. Knee arthroscopy is done through small incisions. Most patients will go home the same day. The torn meniscus is debrided or “shaved” to remove any flaps or unstable edges. Occasionally the torn meniscus can be repaired. A repair is done on a special kind of meniscus tear called a bucket handle tear. If a repair is done, you may have an additional incision on the inside or outside part of your knee. The recovery and rehab is also longer with a meniscus repair. Most patients, excluding those who have had a meniscus repair, are back to normal activities in about 6-8 weeks after a knee arthroscopy.

