

ACL Reconstruction (Patellar Tendon Graft Technique)



Overview

This procedure repairs your knee after a tear of the anterior cruciate ligament (commonly called the "ACL"). This ligament is in the center of the knee. It helps anchor the femur to the tibia. This surgery can allow you to regain normal knee function.

Preparation

In preparation for the procedure, you are anesthetized. The surgeon creates a small incision in the front of your knee. This exposes the patellar tendon, a thick band of tissue attached to your kneecap. The surgeon removes a portion of this tendon and some bone where it is attached. This tissue is called a "graft." It will be used to replace your damaged ACL.

Repair

Next, the surgeon creates a series of small openings in your skin. An arthroscope is placed through one of the openings. This is a viewing device that allows the surgeon to see inside your knee. More surgical instruments are placed through the other openings. The damaged ACL is removed. Using a guide pin, the surgeon carefully drills a tunnel through the tibia and the femur. The graft is pulled through this tunnel and into the position your ACL once occupied. The ends of the graft are anchored. Over time, new tissue will grow along the graft, strengthening the joint.

End of Procedure and Aftercare

When the procedure is complete, the openings in your skin are closed. Your knee is bandaged. It may be placed in a brace or a splint. You will be monitored for a brief time before you are allowed to go home. Your healthcare provider will give you instructions to help your recovery.

