

# Health matters



## Cheltenham Imaging Centre

**Harminder S Gosal,  
Consultant Orthopaedic  
and Knee Surgeon from  
Cheltenham Knee Unit, at  
Linton House, discusses  
injuries to the Anterior  
Cruciate Ligament (ACL)  
of the knee joint**

The ACL is one of the most commonly injured ligaments in the knee joint. Michael Owen, the England footballer, tore his ACL in the last World Cup. It's one of the main stabilising structures in the knee joint and stops the knee from giving way, particularly in activities requiring twisting and turning. ACL tears can affect day to day activities as well as preventing participation in sport.

ACL ruptures occur as a result of twisting injuries to the knee joint, commonly in footballers, rugby players, and skiers. ACL tears are much more common in females compared to males participating in similar sports. Classically patients often hear a 'pop' when the knee joint is twisted with sufficient force, leading to an immediate swelling. A swollen knee after a twisting injury has up to 70% chance of an ACL rupture.

Initial treatment of knee injuries involves 'RICE' - Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation. Although you could live with an ACL injury, if you aspire to play sports, reconstruction of the ligament would be required. Non-athletes may also need surgery if the knee joint keeps 'giving out' on day to day activities, despite having had rehabilitation physiotherapy.

Surgery is carried out utilising keyhole surgical techniques, using either the patient's own hamstring tendons or the middle third of the patella tendon. After surgery the individual will need to undergo an ACL rehabilitation programme with specialist physiotherapists. Most people get back to normal sporting activities around nine months after surgery.

Prompt assessment of the injured knee is important for quick rehabilitation. This should be carried out by a specialist.

Cheltenham Knee Unit offers 'One Stop Clinics' at Linton House where you will be assessed by a Consultant Knee Surgeon, and investigated with any X-rays or MRI scans that may be needed. The Cheltenham Imaging Centre offers access to the advanced Highfield Open MRI, and 3.0T MRI scanners. At the end of the consultation all the investigations will be discussed with you and an appropriate treatment plan made to allow you to return to your normal activities.

For more information, call 01242 535908 or visit [www.cheltenhamkneeunit.co.uk](http://www.cheltenhamkneeunit.co.uk) or pop into Linton House Clinic, Thirlestaine Road, Cheltenham.

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