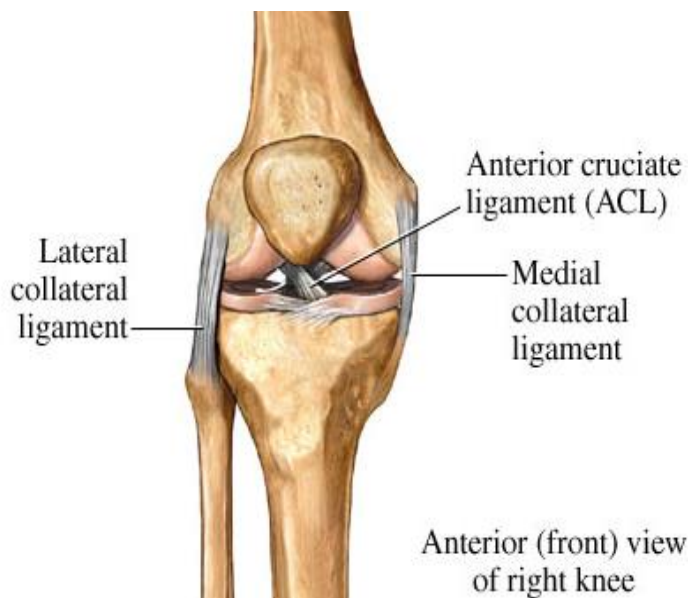


Medial Collateral Ligament Injuries

The medial collateral ligament (MCL) is situated on the inner part of the knee and is usually injured by an impact to the outside of the knee, causing the ligament on the inside to be stressed and resulting in a tear. MCL injuries are common in contact sports such as the various football codes, and skiing. They are classified based on their severity;

- Grade I – mild ligament strain. The patient will have local tenderness over the ligament but no swelling
- Grade II – moderate ligament strain. The patient will have marked tenderness over the ligament and may have localized swelling.
- Grade III – complete ligament tear. The patient complains of instability and a 'wobbly knee'. There may or may not be pain, and the knee joint will swell. These injuries are often associated with ACL tears.



It is important to seek treatment as soon as possible so that the injury can be properly assessed to determine the severity of the injury and therefore the appropriate course of treatment, which will almost always involve a conservative approach i.e. non-surgical.

The main goals of treatment are to control pain and swelling, maintain range of motion whilst allowing the ligament to scar up, and build strength.

Depending on the severity of your injury you may need to wear a brace for several weeks to stabilize the knee and optimize ligament healing.

Most patients with mild injuries can return to sport within 6 weeks, however more severe injuries can take up to 12 weeks, but again this will vary depending on the demands that will be placed on the knee and the patient's ability to meet these demands.