

Orthopaedic Procedure

ACL Reconstruction

1. What is ACL reconstruction?

Anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) Reconstruction is a surgical procedure designed to repair a torn or injured ACL in the knee. The ACL is a crucial ligament that stabilizes the knee joint, and when it's torn, it can lead to instability, pain, and limited mobility. ACL reconstruction involves replacing the damaged ACL with a graft, typically from the patient's own tissue or a donor's tissue, to restore knee stability and function.

2. What are the advantages of ACL reconstruction?

- **Restored knee stability:** ACL reconstruction restores stability to the knee, allowing patients to return to physical activities and sports that require agility, pivoting, and sudden stops and starts.
- **Reduced risk of further damage:** By reconstructing the torn ACL, patients are less likely to experience further damage to the knee joint, such as meniscus tears or articular cartilage injuries.
- **Improved quality of life:** Patients often experience significant improvements in their overall quality of life and the ability to engage in sports and activities they enjoy.
- **Decreased pain and swelling:** Circumcision may reduce the risk of penile cancer, a rare condition.

3. What are the potential risks?

While ACL reconstruction is a common and well-established procedure, it carries potential risks and complications. These may include infection, blood clots, anaesthesia-related issues, graft failure, or persistent knee pain and stiffness. It's essential to follow the surgeon's post-operative instructions to minimize these risks.

4. What happens after?

Recovery following ACL reconstruction is typically a multi-stage process. In the initial days and weeks, the patient will focus on reducing pain and swelling while regaining range of motion and strength. Physical therapy plays a significant role in achieving these goals. Patients will gradually progress to more challenging exercises and activities.

Returning to sports or high-impact activities can take several months, with the specific timeline depending on the patient's individual progress and the nature of the graft used. Full recovery and the ability to return to pre-injury activities are common outcomes of ACL reconstruction when post-operative care is diligently followed. Additionally, patients can expect improved knee stability and function, reducing the risk of future injuries.