

KNEE

Posterolateral Corner (PLC) Injury of the Knee

The posterolateral corner (PLC) is a group of ligaments and other tissues on the outer, back side of the knee, closely related to the LCL (lateral collateral ligament). It helps control sideways movement, knee rotation, and overall knee stability.

How PLC injuries happen

- High-energy trauma, such as motor vehicle accidents
- Sports injuries
- A blow to the inside of the knee
- Knee hyperextension (bending too far back)

PLC injuries often occur together with ACL or PCL tears.

Common symptoms

- Pain on the outside and back of the knee
- Swelling and bruising
- A feeling that the knee is unstable, especially when turning
- Difficulty walking on uneven ground

Why it matters

If a PLC injury is missed or left untreated, it can cause ongoing instability, lead to failure of ACL or PCL surgery, and result in earlier arthritis.

Treatment

Mild injuries are treated with physical therapy and bracing. Moderate to severe injuries often require surgery, and treatment is generally more complex than for isolated ACL or PCL injuries.

Recovery

Recovery can take six to twelve months, and careful, guided rehabilitation is essential.

Key takeaway

PLC injuries are serious, are often missed on initial evaluation, and usually need specialist care. Early diagnosis and proper rehabilitation are very important for all knee ligament injuries.