

# Focus On: Lateral Collateral Ligament Injury

The lateral collateral ligament, or LCL, is a band of tissue on the outside of your knee.

It connects your thighbone to the bone of your lower leg.

An LCL injury can vary in severity. It can be a slight stretch to a complete tear of the ligament.

Symptoms may include swelling, pain, and tenderness, especially on the outside of your knee.

You may also have bruising and an unstable feeling in your knee, like it may lock up or give out.

Treatment will depend on how severe your injury is and whether other parts of your knee are injured.

A minor tear may be treated at home with over-the-counter pain medicine and ice. Use ice for 15 to 20 minutes at a time.

You may use crutches or wear a hinged knee brace. Physical therapy can help increase range of motion and strengthen your muscles.

A severe tear may need surgery. But this usually isn't done unless the ligament has pulled off the bone or if you've also injured other parts of your knee, such as the ACL or meniscus.

To learn more about a lateral collateral ligament injury, talk to your doctor.