



Non-Surgical Treatment for Meniscus Tears

Your knee is constructed with two crescent-shaped menisci, one on the medial (middle) side of your knee and one on the lateral (outside) side of your knee. These discs of cartilage are responsible for cushioning your knee and properly distributing weight in your joint. If you have a sudden movement either from trauma or even something more minor such as stepping the wrong way, you can tear one or both of your menisci. Patients that are older have natural degeneration of their cartilage, which predisposes them to meniscus tears more readily, however, both young and old patients can suffer a meniscus tear.

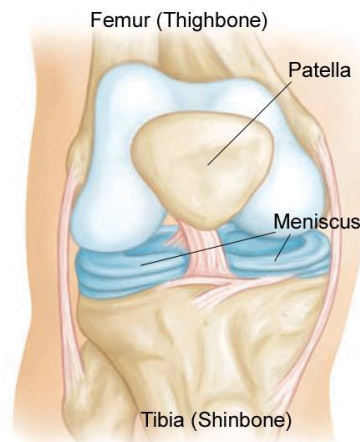


Image from AAOS

An x-ray or MRI may be needed to help identify the extent of the injury and determine the best treatment for you. One commonly done test is called the McMurray test, which is where the knee is bent, straightened and then rotated by a trained physician, putting pressure on the meniscus. If there is a tear, you can hear a “clicking” sound. This is one of the most helpful diagnostic tests with regards to meniscus tears.

The traditional treatment modality for a meniscus tear is a meniscectomy, a surgical procedure where the damaged tissue is cut out. While this treatment can be helpful in the short-term, the research shows us that this is actually not a good long-term solution. In fact, many patients that undergo a meniscectomy procedure are more at risk for severe osteoarthritis which can lead to costly knee replacements. At TLC, we treat meniscus tears with Platelet Rich Plasma, also known as PRP.

Platelet Rich Plasma is a blood product concentration of the growth factors and other healing cells from your blood. Our trained medical staff will draw your blood, and spin it down using on-site state-of-the-art equipment. The mechanism of PRP harnesses the inflammatory properties of your body, and targets it at the area of breakdown or injury. By helping to bolster both the meniscus as well as the supporting

structure, we can help create a stronger and more stable joint. The best part? We aren't cutting out anything or getting rid of any structures at all. Rather, we are helping to rebuild what once was, ultimately improving outcomes and providing better long-term results.

F. Blanke et al. published an article in the Jul-Sept 2015 edition of *Muscle, Ligaments and Tendons Journal* about the efficacy of PRP treatment for injuries of the meniscus. Their research looked at ten different patients of varying ages to determine the effect that PRP may have on meniscus injuries. Looking at these patients, they found that 60% of those studied regained further functionality and activity after treatment with PRP. Their conclusion found that "percutaneous injections of PRP have the ability to achieve pain relief and halt progression on MRI over 6 months in patients with grade 2 meniscal lesions."

Not only have we seen this work and heard the inspiring stories of patients who are back doing what they love, but the science backs it up as well. There is a growing body of research showing that PRP is an effective and safe treatment method for many common orthopedic injuries, including meniscus tears.

At TLC, we see patients with these types of injuries on a regular basis. We have seen this work and are excited to offer it as a treatment option that can help to rebuild and restore.

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