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More osteoarthritis noted later in life in kids who have ACL reconstruction

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Researchers presented results today at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine's (AOSSM) Specialty Day in New Orleans that adolescents who have an Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) reconstruction are more likely to demonstrate osteoarthritic changes later in life.

"Long-term follow-ups after the surgical treatment of ACL injuries in kids are rare and this is one of the few studies that has been able to track individuals," said Olle Mansson, MD, lead author of the study from NU-Hospital Group in Uddevalla, Sweden.

The study assessed 32 patients, aged 12-16 years old, 10-20 years after their initial ACL reconstruction that used bone-patellar bone-tendon or hamstring tendon autograft. Twenty-nine patients underwent clinical, radiographical and health-related quality of life assessments after 10-20 years (mean 175 months). The results revealed significant osteoarthritic changes on the reconstructed knee (65%) compared to the non-involved knee (14%). Quality of life and other health related scores were the same or comparable to those seen in healthy controls.

"Early reconstruction of ACLs is often the trend for young more skeletally mature athletes to restore knee stability and prevent progressive meniscal and/or articular cartilage damage. Often these procedures do allow individuals to return to the playing field and continue an active lifestyle. However, it is still important to evaluate long-term effects such as osteoarthritis when considering surgeries for these

pediatric patients," said Mansson.

Provided by American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine