Improvements in ACL surgery may help prevent knee osteoarthritis

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Injury to the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) in the knee frequently leads to early-onset osteoarthritis, a painful condition that can occur even if the patient has undergone ACL reconstruction to prevent its onset. A new review looks at the ability of two different reconstruction techniques to restore normal knee motion and potentially slow degenerative changes.

The findings suggest that where a graft is placed on the femur is crucial for restoring joint function and knee motion and for preventing cartilage from thinning, a degenerative change associated with osteoarthritis.

"ACL injury can age the knee by an estimated 30 years," said Dr. Lou DeFrate, author of the Journal of Orthopaedic Research review. "Since this injury is so common in young people, it is important to prevent these degenerative changes to maintain joint health and function long into adulthood."


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