



## Functional Sports Assessment

The MOR Rehabilitation Department offers a new assessment tool to identify the functional sports level of an athlete after ACL surgery and rehabilitation. It is also used to assess whether athletes are prone to ACL injuries and if a prevention program is needed. The Functional Sports Assessment (FSA) includes a series of tests that measure a patient's strength, endurance, power, agility and stability. The FSA provides guidance for a safe return to sports and determines if further rehab is needed. The one-hour test requires a doctor's prescription and includes a 30-minute follow-up appointment and a written assessment.

For more information on the FSA, contact:  
Donna Williams PT, MHS: 312.423.2513  
or [donna.williams@rushortho.com](mailto:donna.williams@rushortho.com).

## Skyrocketing ACL injuries

ACL tears are the most common injury in young athletes today. Approximately 400,000 ACL injuries occur in the U.S. every year. In just five years, the number of ACL patients seen by MOR physicians has more than doubled and the number of ACL patients under 25 has tripled.

### Go to Guys

MOR sports medicine physicians perform at least 600 ACL surgeries a year – one of the highest number of any orthopedic practice in Illinois.

## Midwest Orthopaedics at Rush Knee Team

*(All are physicians for the Chicago Bulls  
and Chicago White Sox)*

**Dr. Bernard Bach**

*MOR Director of Sports Medicine*

**Dr. Charles Bush-Joseph**

*Head Team Physician for the Chicago White Sox*

**Dr. Brian Cole**

*Head Team Physician for the Chicago Bulls*

**Dr. Brian Forsythe**

*Team Physician for U.S. Soccer*

**Dr. Shane Nho**

*Head Team Physician for Chicago Steel*

**Dr. Nikhil Verma**

*Team Physician for Nazareth Academy*



# Understanding ACL Injuries







## What is an ACL?

The knee is a hinged joint made up of three bones and four main ligaments. The anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) is a ligament in the center of the joint that connects the bottom of the thigh bone to the top of the shin bone and provides stability to the knee.

## Who Gets an ACL injury?

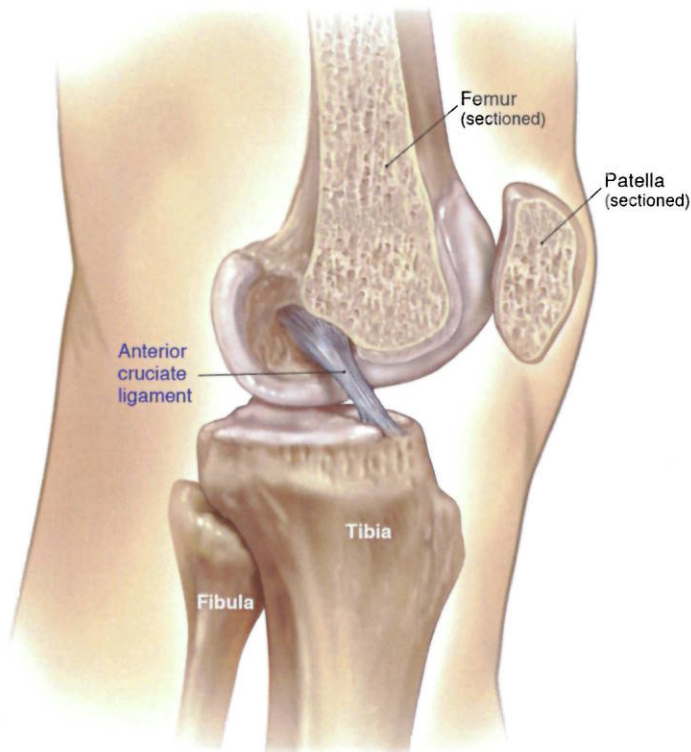
Almost all athletes can get an ACL injury, but it is more prevalent in those who participate in soccer, basketball, lacrosse, volleyball, cheerleading, football, skiing and gymnastics.

### Girls vs. Boys

Experts say female athletes are up to 10 times more at risk of ACL tears because of a different body shape and biomechanics than male athletes. Also, female hormones may loosen ligaments, making them more susceptible to ACL injuries.

## How does an injury occur?

ACL injuries can be caused by a hit to the knee (direct contact) or when an athlete is pivoting, decelerating suddenly or landing from a jump (indirect contact). Athletes who experience a full tear of the ACL usually describe hearing a 'pop' or 'crack' sound which is often followed by pain, swelling and knee instability with use. Most of these athletes require surgery followed by six to 12 months of rehabilitation in order to return to higher levels of activity.



## How are they treated?

Most of the time, MOR sports medicine physicians will recommend reconstructive surgery for patients who have torn their ACLs. This will help protect overall stability and function of the knee. Surgeons use either an allograft (ligament tissue from a cadaver) or an autograft (the patient's own tissue). Usually, surgery is performed arthroscopically, reducing the risks associated with traditional open surgery. In most cases, surgery is followed by physical therapy to strengthen the joint and regain full range of motion. Research by Midwest Orthopaedics at Rush shows a high percentage of athletes return to sport following ACL reconstruction. For more information on treatment, please call 877 MD BONES (877.632.6637).



## Can ACL injuries be prevented?

Physicians at Midwest Orthopaedics at Rush suggest:

- Pre-season endurance training
- Before play, always warm up with cardio exercises, followed by plyometric and agility drills and end with stretching
- Rest and recover by taking a break between seasons
- Proper protective equipment, including footwear