THE PHYSICAL THERAPY SPECIALTY CENTER
a division of Primary Care Partners

NEWSLETTER

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ACHILLES TENDON RUPTURES – ALL ROADS MAY NOT LEAD TO SURGERY

An Achilles tendon rupture is a serious injury that requires many months of rehab. The Achilles tendon connects the muscles in your calf to your heel bone, and it plays a key role in walking, running, jumping, and any activity that requires pushing off your foot. Once it's torn, it can be treated with surgery or without surgery. Either way, physical therapy is an important part of the process. Check out our blog for more information.

AROUND THE CLINIC:

Happy March! We hope everyone is ready for whatever spring may bring. We have had such a warm winter that it seems as if it has just been a long spring. As spring truly sets in, it is time for all you weekend warriors to get out and start doing spring cleaning, yard projects, and if you are lucky, some fun mountain activities. This could include hiking, biking, or trekking (Oh, my!). Whatever plans you have on your agenda for the warmer weather, it is important to ease back into activities. Over the winter months we may have rested more, and our bodies are not ready to take on the load from increased activity, which can lead to injuries. We have a couple past blogs to help you get started and prevent injuries. Check them out on our blog list and let us know if you have more questions.

- Let's Move it! (Posted February 2022)
- Our 5-part Transition to the Gym series (Posted early 2021)

Spotlight Diagnosis of the Month

This section is to provide details about commonly seen diagnoses or injuries in our clinic and how Therapy may help.

Diagnosis: MCL Strain

What is it?

The MCL is the medial collateral ligament which allows the knee joint to move while at the same time remain stable. This specific ligament prevents the knee from moving side to side, stabilizing the inside of the knee joint. MCL injuries can range from a mild sprain, partial tear, or a complete grade 3 rupture. When the MCL sustains an injury such as a tear, it can be painful, impair your mobility, cause the knee to feel unstable, and it can make it feel like you cannot hold your weight through the injured lower extremity.

Common Symptoms

The most common and noticeable MCL tear symptom is pain deep inside your knee and directly over of the ligament. There may also be a “popping” sensation that you may feel and hear in the knee at time of injury. Other symptoms include bruising, swelling, instability of the knee, and the inability to hold up your own weight. MCL injuries are categorized based on the severity of the injury. They are classified as grades 1, 2, or 3.

- **Grade 1 MCL Tear**
  - This is classified as a mild sprain that can be caused by direct trauma to the knee. These tears are most common in athletes playing sports such as soccer, tennis, and football. The knee typically remains stable with this grade of tear. However, it will likely still be painful and tender in that inside portion of the knee.
- **Grade 2 MCL tear**
  - This is classified as moderately damaged with a partial tear to the ligament. With this level of a tear, you may notice the knee feeling loose and unstable. Pain is also typically greater and is accompanied by tenderness and swelling of the knee. In some cases, surgical intervention may be needed to fully recover from.
- **Grade 3 MCL tear**
  - This grade of tear is the most severe MCL injury because at this stage, the ligament is completely torn. In this case the knee will feel extremely loose and unstable with increased pain and swelling. When dealing with this level of severity, it is typical that it will accompany other damage to your knee such as an ACL tear or even damage to the meniscus.

How Physical Therapy Can Help

Most MCL injuries do not require surgery to make a full recovery depending on if there were other parts of the knee that were damaged. The MCL has a good blood supply, which can make it much more optimal for healing. Physical therapy can help with regaining strength and mobility with various low-impact activities. The recovery time for a mild MCL sprain is typically 3-4 weeks, while higher grades that are more severe can take up to 12 weeks to heal. If you need help recovering from an injury or preventing future MCL injuries, please give us a call. Physical therapists at The Physical Therapy Specialty Center can help build a customized treatment plan to meet your unique needs and goals to get back to your previous level of function.

Please confirm your appointments electronically so we know you are coming, and please continue to call our office if you need to reschedule. We have a $50 no show/less than 24 hour cancelation fee.