

ACL (Anterior Cruciate Ligament) tear exercises

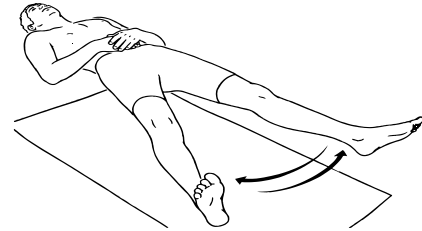
The ACL is a major ligament inside of the knee. If injured, an ACL will need treatment. In some cases, the injury can be treated with physical therapy and follow-up care. In some cases surgery will also be needed.

What exercises might be needed?

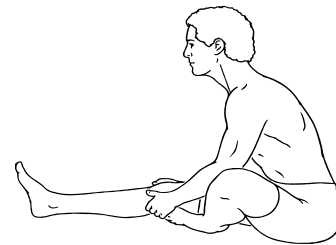
Early therapy is needed, starting the day after surgery. Therapy will focus on motion, building strength and walking.

1. Hip out/in with knee straight

On your back with brace on: Keep knee straight and toes/foot toward the ceiling. Bring the affected leg out to the side and back in to the start position. Repeat 10 to 20 times per set. Do 1 to 3 sets per session. Do 2 to 4 sessions per day.

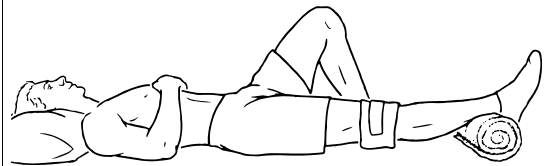


2. **Sitting hamstring stretch with brace on:** Keep affected leg straight in brace, tuck unaffected foot near groin. With back straight bend forward at the waist until a stretch is felt in back of affected thigh. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds. Repeat 3 to 5 times per set. Do 1 to 3 sets per session. Do 2 to 4 sessions per day.

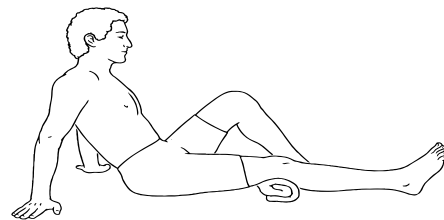


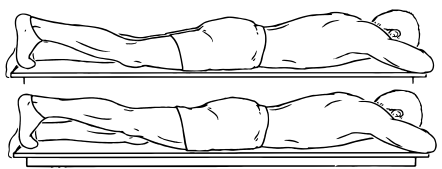
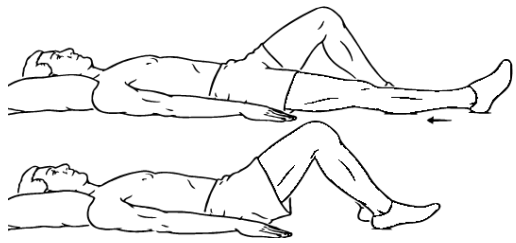
3. Knee extension with towel

On your back (no brace): Put a rolled towel under the affected side ankle. Put a light weight across the knee. If using a cold pack (bag of frozen peas/corn, etc), cover the knee with a light cloth first. Hold for 15 to 20 minutes as tolerated. Do 2 to 4 sessions per day.



4. **Quad set with slight knee flexion (no brace):** Tense muscles on top of affected thigh. Hold for 3 to 5 seconds. Relax. Repeat 10 to 15 times per set. Do 2 sets per session. Do 2 to 3 sessions per day.



<p>5. Quadriceps set</p> <p>On your stomach (no brace): Use toes to support lower legs. Tighten thigh muscles to straighten knees. Hold for 5 to 7 seconds. Relax. Repeat 10 to 20 times per set. Do 1 to 3 sets per session. Do 2 to 4 sessions per day.</p>	
<p>6. Heel Slide</p> <p>On your back (no brace): Slide the heel of the affected leg toward the buttocks until a gentle stretch is felt. Hold for 3 to 5 seconds. Relax and straighten the leg. Repeat 10 to 20 times per set. Do 1 to 3 sets per session. Do 2 to 4 sessions per day.</p>	
<p>7. Ice for 20 minutes every 2 to 3 hours while awake. This can be done by using bag of frozen peas, corn or other vegetables or ice cubes sealed in a plastic bag. Put a towel or pillow case between the ice and the skin. The bags of vegetables can be refrozen many times, but do not eat them once they have thawed.</p>	

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, therapist or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has:

- Sharp pain during or after exercise.
- A fever.
- A significant increase in swelling, redness or drainage.
- Special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

For other health and wellness information, check out this resource:

<https://kidshealth.org/ChildrensWi/en/parents>

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.