



# ESSEX MIDDLE RIVER VETERINARY CENTER

*Caring Vets. Healthier Pets. Since 1950.*

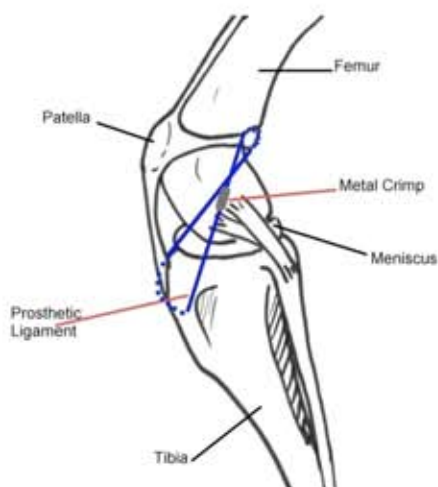
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## Cranial Cruciate Ligament Rupture

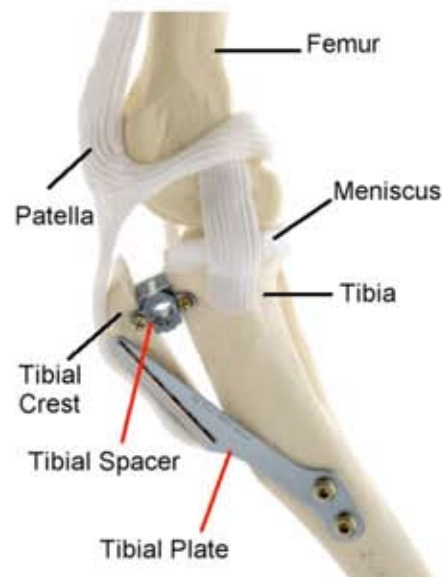
The cranial cruciate ligament, also known as the "ACL" (anterior cruciate ligament) in people, is a small but very important ligament in the knee (see left diagram). Once the ACL is ruptured or torn, the knee becomes unstable. The actual tear in the ligament may be partial or complete, and lameness may appear suddenly with real pain or more gradual over several weeks with less noticeable discomfort. Typically a dog with a torn ACL will hold the affected leg up, toe-touch at a standing position, and even run with no obvious lameness. Without surgical repair the knee joint will likely become more arthritic and your dog will possibly require lifelong daily pain medication. The purpose of surgery is to restabilize the joint and to minimize the degree of arthritis that will occur.



At the Essex Middle River Veterinary Center we offer 2 techniques for cruciate repair:



The first technique is called the extracapsular technique and it involves placing a 40 or 80 pound nylon line around the outside surface of the knee joint to "anatomically" replace the torn ligament (left diagram). The second technique is called tibial tuberosity advancement (TTA) and it involves cutting the front top portion of the tibial bone and permanently moving it forward with a titanium spacer and plate to neutralize abnormal forces that



occur during weight bearing (right diagram). The extracapsular technique costs less, but recovery time is longer (up to 4 months) and arthritic changes may be greater vs. the TTA technique. The TTA technique costs more, but recovery time is shorter (up to 2 months) and arthritic changes are likely to be much less severe long term.

Remember, not doing any surgery, the knee will always be unstable and arthritic changes will certainly occur to a greater extent. Your dog will be thoroughly evaluated prior to any surgery of the knee. This includes bloodwork to check kidney and liver function (for safe anesthesia purposes), a tick blood test to rule out Lyme disease, and X-rays to identify any pre-existing hip dysplasia, intervertebral disc disease, and knee joint pathology.

If you have any questions, please call.