

INTERVENTIONS FOR TREATING POSTERIOR CRUCIATE LIGAMENT INJURIES OF THE KNEE IN ADULTS

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ABSTRACT

Background

Injuries of the posterior cruciate ligament (PCL) of the knee frequently occur in automobile accidents and sports injuries, although they are less frequent overall than injuries of the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL). Some patients show significant symptoms and subsequent articular deterioration, while others are essentially asymptomatic, maintaining habitual function. Management of PCL injuries remains controversial and prognosis can vary widely. Interventions extend from non-operative (conservative) procedures to reconstruction of the PCL, in the hope that the surgical procedure may have a positive effect in the reduction/prevention of future osteoarthritic changes in the knee.

Objective

To determine the effectiveness and safety of surgical and conservative interventions for PCL injuries in adults.

Criteria for considering studies for this review

We searched the Cochrane Bone, Joint and Muscle Trauma Group Specialised Register (April 2004), the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (The Cochrane Library Issue 1, 2004), MEDLINE via PubMed (1966 to April 2004), EMBASE (1966 to April 2004), CINAHL (1982 to April 2004), LILACS (1982 to April 2004), SportsDiscus (1975 to April 2004), and reference lists of articles.

Selection criteria

Randomized or quasi-randomized clinical trials comparing various methods of operative and conservative interventions, and comparisons with each other for the treatment of PCL injuries.

Data collection and analysis

References found with the search strategy were evaluated independently by two review authors.

Main results

No randomized or quasi-randomized controlled studies meeting the selection criteria were identified.

Authors' conclusions

Future research should include randomized controlled trials of acute isolated PCL injuries, or PCL injuries when combined with other ligament injuries of the knee, treated operatively and conservatively. Adequate numbers of patients and an objective methodology for patient evaluation must be used in future studies of these interventions to determine the long-term results.
