

What is rehabilitation and how do you know if it is necessary?

Rehabilitation is recommended for patients who have a new injury to a joint, muscle or tendon, or for patients who have chronic pain, instability, or a history of repeated injury to a specific area.

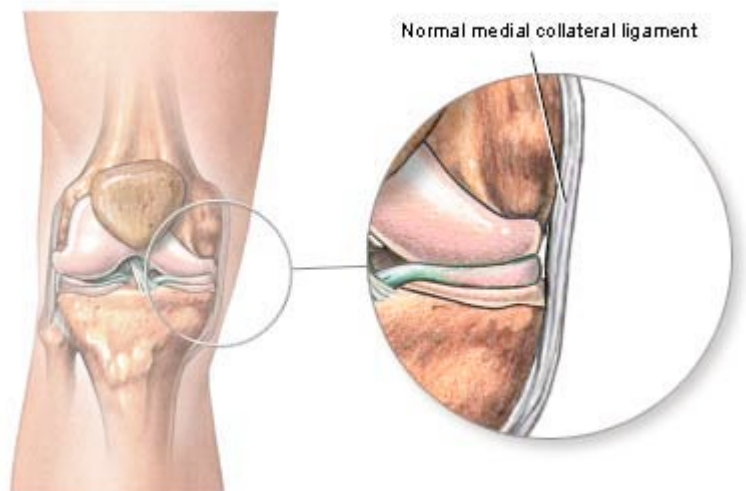
Our joints are designed to allow us to move freely and unrestricted. When there is an injury or some other problem that affects how the joints or muscles function we have pain and limited movement. Every joint is made up of at least 2 bones and a group of

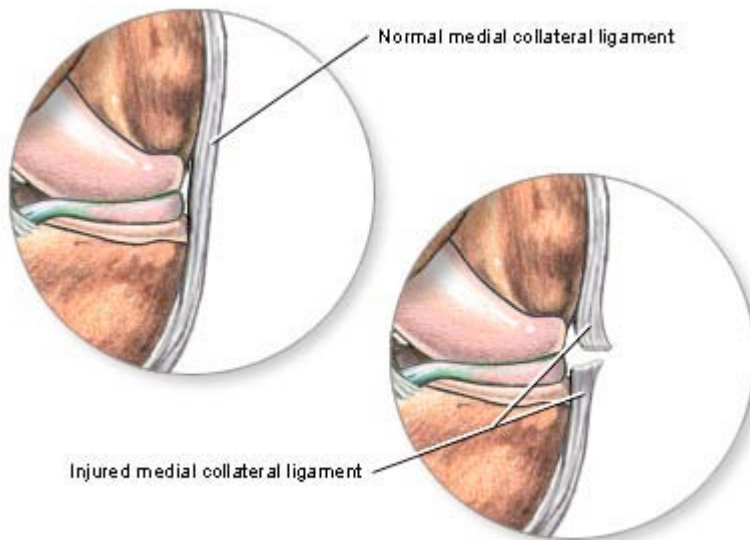
ligaments that hold the bones together.

For example, in your knee the thigh bone is connected to the shin bone through muscles (thigh muscles, hamstring, calf) and a series of ligaments (see picture). Think of the ligaments as thick rubber bands that are somewhat elastic. The muscles move the joints in the desired direction (in the knee bending and straightening); the ligaments hold the bones together.

When everything is working correctly there is no pain.

Front of right knee





If an injury occurs some part of this joint complex has been disrupted. It could be a ligament, cartilage, muscle, tendon, or bone (see picture of ligament tear).

Rehabilitation is used to make sure the joint can return to normal and all



the components of the joint work again in a synchronous fashion. If a joint is unable to return to normal function following an injury and rehabilitation is not used then the joint will begin to function with compensation. If we move with compensation then the joint is moving in an uncoordinated, abnormal fashion. Compensated movements cause pain to the injured area or can cause pain in a different area. An example of this is if someone injures their ankle and is limping then the knee on the same side or on the opposite side can begin to hurt. If the abnormal joint motion is left unchanged, it often leads to break down and arthritis.

This is where we can help. Our job is to first diagnose what has been injured, ligament, bone, cartilage, or muscle. Then, with the use of mobilizations and/or adjustments, restore normal joint motion. That is where most chiropractic offices stop - but not us! Next, we strengthen the muscles around the joint so that they can stabilize and protect the joint. When a comprehensive treatment plan is put in place you not only get back to normal more quickly, but you stay that way.