



Patellar Tendon Rupture

Definition: A rupture of the patellar tendon is due to a sudden, forceful contraction of the quadriceps muscles on the front side of the upper leg. This normally only occurs if there has been chronic swelling that has caused tissue degeneration to the structure (tendon).

Common Terms: Patellar ligament rupture

Typical Mechanism of Injury: Overload secondary to straightening the leg against resistance or forceful contraction of the quadriceps muscle. This may also occur when someone is landing from a jump of reasonable height.

Common Signs and Symptoms: Gross deformity of patella (knee cap) in a position that looks higher than normal on the leg, significant swelling, and extreme pain when the injury initially occurs.

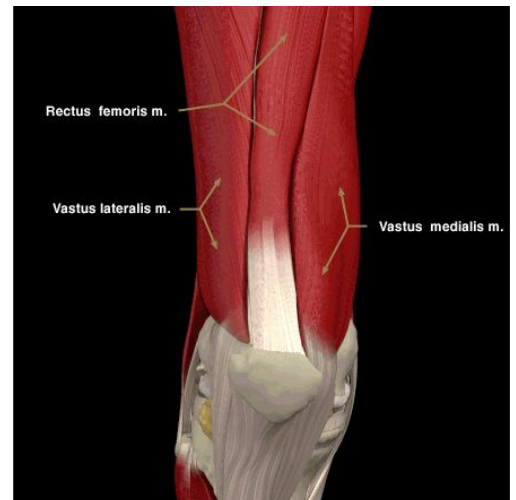
Common Treatment: A rupture of the patellar tendon requires surgical repair in order to reattach the tendon to the knee cap.

Prevention: Conservative care for those with patellar tendinitis is one means of preventing this injury in some athletes. It should also be noted that those that receive steroid (anti-inflammatory) injections into the knee are predisposed to a patellar tendon rupture, and should avoid intense exercise because of weakened fibers due to the steroids.

Expectations: Surgery should take place within 7-10 days immediately followed by a supervised rehabilitation program. Individuals will normally return to full function within one year.



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