



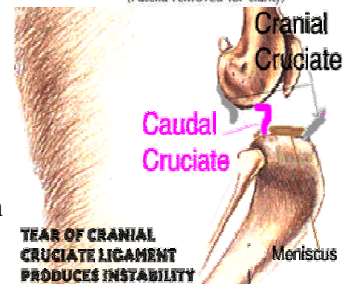
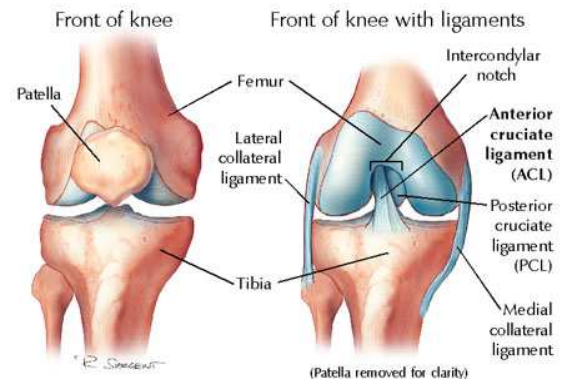
# ANTERIOR CRUCIATE DISEASE

*So your dog has been diagnosed with a cruciate rupture...what exactly does this mean? and what options are available to you?*

## What does a ruptured cruciate mean?

The cruciate ligament is part of the stifle (or knee) joint. It plays an important role in keeping the knee stable-helping to prevent excessive rotation and hyperextension of the knee. There are in fact 2 cruciate ligaments-the anterior (front one) and the posterior (back one). The anterior ligament is the one that animals most commonly tear. Anterior cruciate disease is the most common cause of acute hind leg lameness in dogs.

There are 2 ways in which a cruciate rupture can present. It may cause a sudden lameness in a back leg or it may present as a more ongoing, but low grade lameness. It can occur in both back legs and is more common in certain breeds. We can usually classify the degree of rupture into 2 categories-either a partial tear (where the ligament is still partially in tact) or a complete rupture. Those which are diagnosed as a partial tear usually progress to a complete rupture with time and so it is usually best to consider treatment earlier rather than later to help minimize damage on the joint.



## So what options are available?

The best options can vary between dogs and certainly your veterinarian will discuss the pros and cons of each option given each individual case. The first consideration is conservative vs surgical.

### Conservative Treatment

Conservative treatment may be an option in smaller dogs-but does not tend to work well in larger dogs. It consists of rest, anti-inflammatory medication and weight control. It does not fix the problem, simply helps the dog live with it. Even in some smaller patients this may not be enough.

### Surgical Treatment

Surgery is the second main option and here there are 2 main surgeries available.

#### 1. DeAngelis

The first option is known as the De Angelis technique. This involves a nylon prosthesis being placed outside the knee joint. This is able to mimic the function of the anterior cruciate ligament. This is a permanent prosthesis and does not need to be removed unless the dog is having problems with it. This is a surgery which can take place here at the clinic.

#### 2. Tibial Plateau Leveling Osteotomy (TPLO)

The second option is known as a TPLO. This involves a cut being made into the tibia (shin bone) and the 2 pieces segments then being held in position using special plate and screws. This technique helps to change the bone shape and by doing this stops the forces which produce the abnormal movement in the joint. By doing this the anterior cruciate ligament is no longer needed and the joint becomes stable. The implants in this case are also permanent and not removed unless the dog is having trouble with them. This is a specialist procedure therefore cannot currently be performed at this clinic. We are however able to organize this procedure for you.

## What happens after surgery

Regardless of which surgical option you decide upon following surgery your dog MUST be strictly confined for a minimum of 4-6 weeks-this involves keeping your dog in a very small room or cage to limit movement as excessive movement of jumping in the first few weeks can cause the surgical procedure to fail. In the following 6 week period-your dog can only have restricted exercise and only on a lead. Your veterinarian will explain all of this to you in more detail. This confinement period is extremely important as without correct confinement after surgery the surgical procedure may be a waste of time. Your dog will also be on pain relief after surgery to help reduce any swelling and will need a few check ups with your vet along the way. Physiotherapy can also assist in healing and return to function-ask your vet for more details.

