

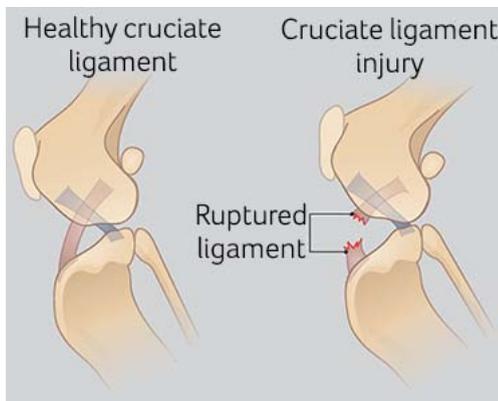


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# Cruciate Ligament Disease in Dogs

## What is Cruciate Ligament Disease?

The cruciate ligaments are strong bands of tissue inside your dog's knee joint that help keep the joint stable. Cruciate ligament disease occurs when one or both of these ligaments are partially or fully torn. This injury is common in dogs and can cause pain and difficulty moving.



## How Does It Happen?

Cruciate ligament injury can happen suddenly due to trauma, such as a bad landing or twist. It can also develop gradually over time as the ligament weakens from wear and tear, especially in middle-aged or overweight dogs.

## Symptoms to Watch For

- Limping or favouring one leg
- Difficulty standing up or climbing stairs
- Swelling around the knee
- Pain or sensitivity when touching the joint
- Decreased activity or reluctance to exercise
- Stiffness after resting

## How It Affects Quality of Life

A torn cruciate ligament causes pain and instability in the knee joint. This can limit your dog's ability to run, jump, and enjoy normal activities. Over time, it can lead to arthritis and further joint damage if left untreated.

## Diagnosing Cruciate Ligament Disease

Our veterinarians will perform a thorough physical examination, including checking your dog's knee for instability or pain. We may also recommend:

- Radiographs to look for arthritis or joint changes

Radiographs are also quite often required in order to get imaging to send to an orthopaedic surgeon to help prepare a surgical plan.

## Treatment and Surgical Options

Treatment depends on the severity of the injury and your dog's size and lifestyle. Options include:

Non-surgical management:

- Rest and controlled exercise
- Pain relief and anti-inflammatory medications
- Weight management and physical therapy

Surgical options:

Surgery is often recommended for active dogs or those with complete ligament tears.

Common procedures include:

- TPLO (Tibial Plateau Leveling Osteotomy): Alters the knee mechanics to stabilise the joint
- TTA (Tibial Tuberosity Advancement): Changes the angle of the knee to reduce instability
- Extracapsular repair: Uses sutures outside the joint to stabilise it, more common in smaller dogs

Our vets will discuss the best approach for your dog and guide you through recovery and rehabilitation.

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If you notice any signs of lameness or discomfort in your dog's leg, please contact Barrington Coast Vets to arrange an examination. Early diagnosis and treatment help ensure the best outcome for your furry friend.

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