

Image One MRI meets Pickleball

Shortly after moving to Kelowna, I scanned my first Pickleball injury. As an MRI technologist for over 20 years, I've seen many different types of sports-related injuries, but this was a first.

By Corinne LeBlanc

"What is Pickleball", I asked my patient. Although in great pain, he spoke so passionately about the sport and couldn't wait to recover to get back in the game.

From what I understood, Pickleball has rules common to other racquet sports like ping-pong, badminton and tennis. The more I asked about it the more confusing the game became to me. I wanted to know a little more about the sport so I decided to do a little research.

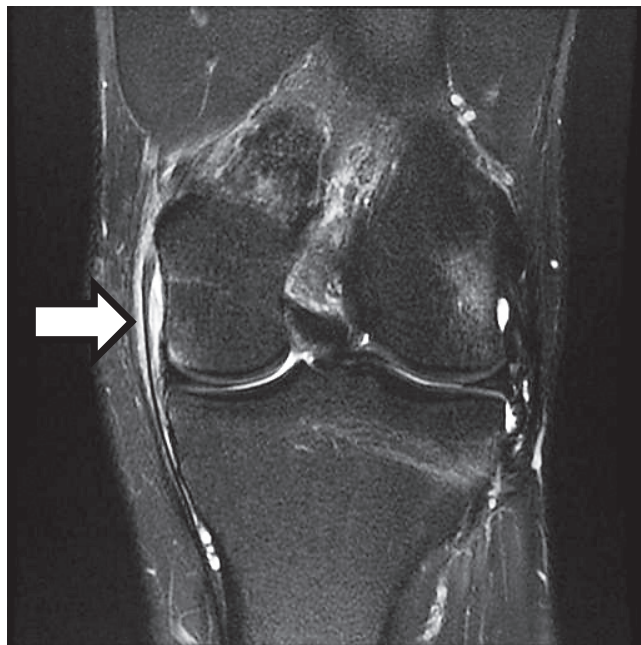
Pickleball was invented

in 1965 on Bainbridge Island, outside of Seattle, WA. It was intended to be a fun, but challenging game for people of all ages to enjoy. Pickleball caught on fast, initially through word-of-mouth with people making their own paddles and improvising existing tennis courts. It was officially incorporated in 1972, which allowed for proper facilities and manufacturing of equipment needed for the game.

Today Pickleball can be found in many pockets of North America including a huge membership in the Okanagan. Pickleball is very popular in Kelowna but also popular in some of the southern states our snowbirds flock to in the winter. There are over 1,500 facilities in the U.S. with over 80 in Arizona alone. It can be played indoors or outdoors and requires two to four players.

Knees are susceptible to injury with Pickleball. As with other court-type sports, Pickleball requires quick stopping and starting or rapidly changing directions. These extreme forces can result in sprained or torn ligaments.

The most commonly injured ligaments in the knee are the medial



Bright fluid surrounds this Medial Collateral Ligament (arrow). Although a Grade II tear is present, this image demonstrates that some fibres of the ligament are still connecting the femur to the tibia.

collateral ligament (MCL) and the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL), but the posterior cruciate ligament (PCL) and lateral collateral ligament (LCL) can also experience injury.

Physicians can perform clinical tests that will help determine the type of injury that may have occurred but an MRI is usually needed for confirmation and, when surgery is recommended, pre-surgical planning.

The MCL is usually affected when the knee is forcefully pushed inward. This can happen with impact to the outside of the knee or during activities that involve bending,

twisting, or a quick change of direction. Skiing and other sports with lots of stop-and-go movements, jumping or weaving can also result in MCL injuries. An MRI can help determine the grade or severity of the injury which in turn will decide which type of treatment is needed.

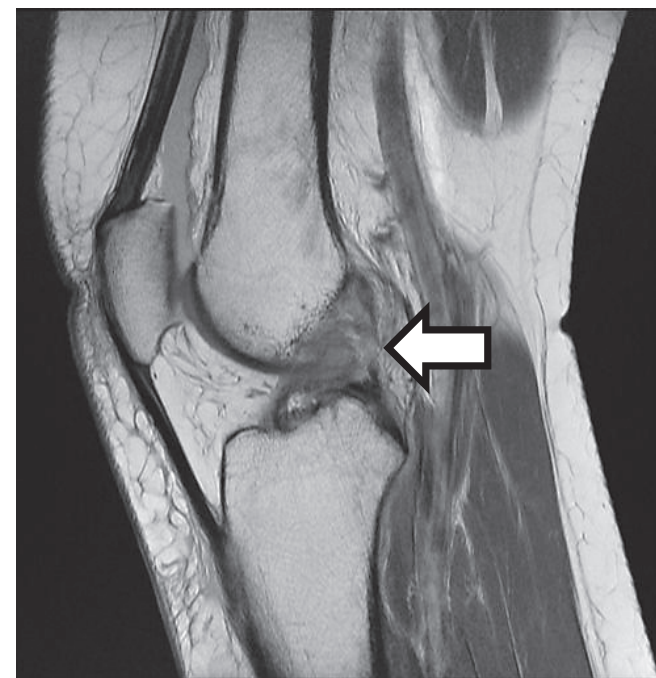
The ACL is injured when the knee is hyperextended, or straightened beyond its normal limits, twisted or bent side to side. Similar to the MCL, this can happen when changing directions quickly with one foot solidly planted on the ground. It can also occur upon landing from a jump, especially if

the leg is straight, or any other activity that results in a sudden stop with the leg straight. MRI will show if the ACL is completely torn, which may require surgery, or physical therapy to strengthen the knee.

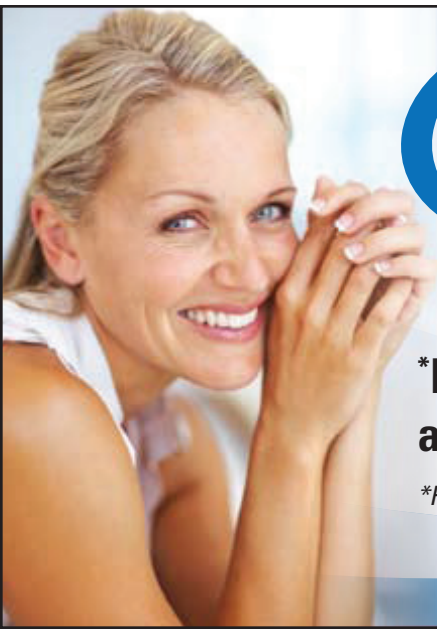
Although less common, a PCL injury can cause pain and instability. A tear can occur when the lower leg is pushed back relative to the upper leg or when a person falls on a bent knee with their foot pointed down, also causing the lower leg to move backward. These are commonly seen in motor vehicle accidents or contact sports such as football.

LCL injuries are most likely to occur following a direct blow to the inside of the knee. Just like the MCL, these injuries are graded, depending on the extent of the injury. LCL injuries themselves, unless severe, often do not require surgery but quite frequently are associated with injuries to other structures that may benefit from surgery.

If Pickleball is your game but you have an injury, you may need an MRI to help with the diagnosis. Please feel free to call our clinic to discuss how an MRI may be useful for your injury, or, just to talk about Pickleball!



This Anterior Cruciate Ligament (arrow) is completely torn as demonstrated by discontinuity of the normally thick, dark ligament.



DISCOVER THE ADVANTAGE

• Caring and timely patient service • Virtually no wait time

*MRI can be used to diagnose abnormalities of the following:

- Brain / Head
- Spine

- Joints (shoulder, knee, hip, elbow, wrist, ankle)

- Abdomen
- Pelvis

*For body parts not listed, please call our clinic

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