



No difference in return-to-sport rate or activity level in people with Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) injury managed with ACL reconstruction of Rehabilitation alone: a systematic review and meta-analysis

Method:

A systematic review and meta-analysis. A comprehensive search was conducted across seven electronic databases for empirical studies published to July 2023



Articles were included if they assessed return-to-sport and/or activity levels in two groups where one underwent an anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction and the other had exercise-based rehabilitation that was standardised and/or supervised by a healthcare professional

Findings

18 articles reporting on 15 studies (two randomised controlled trials) met inclusion criteria. 10 studies had a high risk of confounding bias that was likely to favour anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction including biases in group allocation and differences in activity and return-to-sport advice between groups.

The findings suggest that anterior cruciate ligament **reconstruction** was **not associated with higher return-to-sport rates** compared to **rehabilitation alone**



A **small difference favouring anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction** was observed for **Tegner Activity Scale scores** that **did not exceed the minimal detectable change** and **no difference was observed after excluding studies with a high risk of confounding bias**

The evidence is of low or very low certainty because of the heterogeneity of results and the high risk of bias in the included studies.

There was no difference in return-to-sport rates or activity levels when comparing anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction with rehabilitation alone for the management of anterior cruciate ligament injury.