

ACL tear? One of athletes' greatest fears can be repaired – without surgery but with biologics

Treatment for a torn ACL typically involves surgically reconstructing the ligament with harvested tissue.

But what if a new type of treatment could prompt the ruptured ligament to just grow back together again, eliminating the need to [harvest replacement tissue](#)?

Moving [beyond reconstruction](#) toward restoration, or enabling the ligament to repair itself, is the idea behind an emerging area of orthopedics that looks to harness biologics—in some cases animal tissue augmented with human blood and other growth factors—to rally the body's natural healing processes.

One method that's already in use in some cases is the Bridge-Enhanced ACL Restoration Implant—known as the BEAR implant—which encourages the stumps of a torn ACL to grow back together.

The procedure utilizes a cylindrical marshmallow-like implant made of bovine collagen injected with a patient's blood, and the growth factors therein that proponents say can help jump-start healing.

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The recovery and return-to-sport time lines are currently comparable with those of reconstruction, though the rehabilitation process for BEAR implant patients requires a healing period with less activity during the first six weeks.

Proponents said the BEAR implant shows that the concept of enhancing the body's natural capacity to heal itself with biologics can work.

[**This is an excerpt. Read the original post here**](#)