Knee Instability Test (Lachman Test)

Name	Date

The Lachman Test or Knee Instability Test is a clinical examination used to assess the stability of the knee joint, particularly the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL). It is a common test performed by healthcare professionals, such as orthopedic specialists, sports medicine physicians, and physical therapists, to diagnose ACL injuries or knee instability.

Instructions

1. Explain the procedure to the patient, including its purpose and potential discomfort.

2. Obtain informed consent from the patient before proceeding with the test.

3. Ask the patient to lie flat on their back on an examination table or firm surface.

4. Ensure that the knee to be tested is relaxed and slightly bent (approximately 20-30 degrees of flexion).

5. Stand on the side of the patient's knee being tested.

6. Place one hand above the knee joint to stabilize the thigh firmly against the examination table.

7. With your other hand, grasp the lower leg just below the knee joint, preferably using the hamstrings tendons as landmarks.

8. Gently pull the tibia forward (anteriorly) while preventing any rotation or other movements. This motion tests the anterior translation of the tibia relative to the femur.

9. Observe and feel for any excessive anterior movement or "soft endpoint" of the tibia compared to the unaffected knee.

Interpretation

The test is considered positive if there is increased anterior translation of the tibia compared to the unaffected knee or if there is a "mushy" or soft endpoint, suggesting possible ACL instability. A positive Lachman Test indicates potential ACL injury or knee instability.

Reminders

- The test should be performed gently and controlled to avoid causing additional harm to the knee.
- It's essential to communicate with the patient throughout the test, ensuring their comfort and cooperation.
- This is just one of several tests used to assess knee instability. A comprehensive evaluation may require additional examinations and diagnostic tools.

Additional notes