

## Natural Health Solutions

### **ACL TLC: Healing an injured cranial cruciate ligament without surgery.**

*By Shawn Messonnier, DVM*

Abby is a 3-year-old spayed female Miniature Schnauzer. Two weeks prior to visiting my clinic, her previous veterinarian diagnosed her with a possible injury to the right cranial cruciate (ACL) ligament. This ligament, one of two that cross the knee joint, is the most commonly injured ligament in the body for both dogs and humans.

As is true with people who have a similar injury, trauma to the ACL usually occurs when the dog bears weight on the leg, then twists it. This often occurs during sports, such as agility, or any vigorous play. For example, a dog can injure its ACL when the owner throws a ball, the dog runs after it, then twists its body as it retrieves the ball and turns to run back to the owner. Abby's owner told me that the dog's injury occurred when she was chasing a rabbit in the backyard.

Abby's original veterinarian recommended surgery to correct the dog's damaged ligament, but her owner wanted to avoid surgery if at all possible. She set up an appointment to discuss potential alternative approaches.

Want to read the full story? Pick up the February 2009 issue of DOG WORLD today, or subscribe to receive the best dog articles, dog news, and dog information every month!