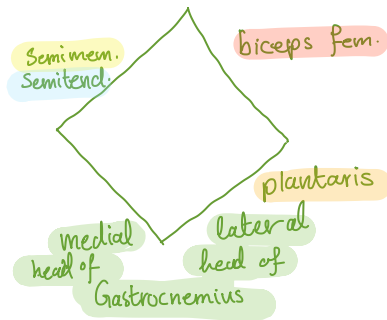


Anatomy of popliteal fossa



Popliteal Fossa

- The popliteal fossa is a diamond-shaped intermuscular space
- situated at the back of the knee
- The fossa is most prominent when the knee joint is flexed.

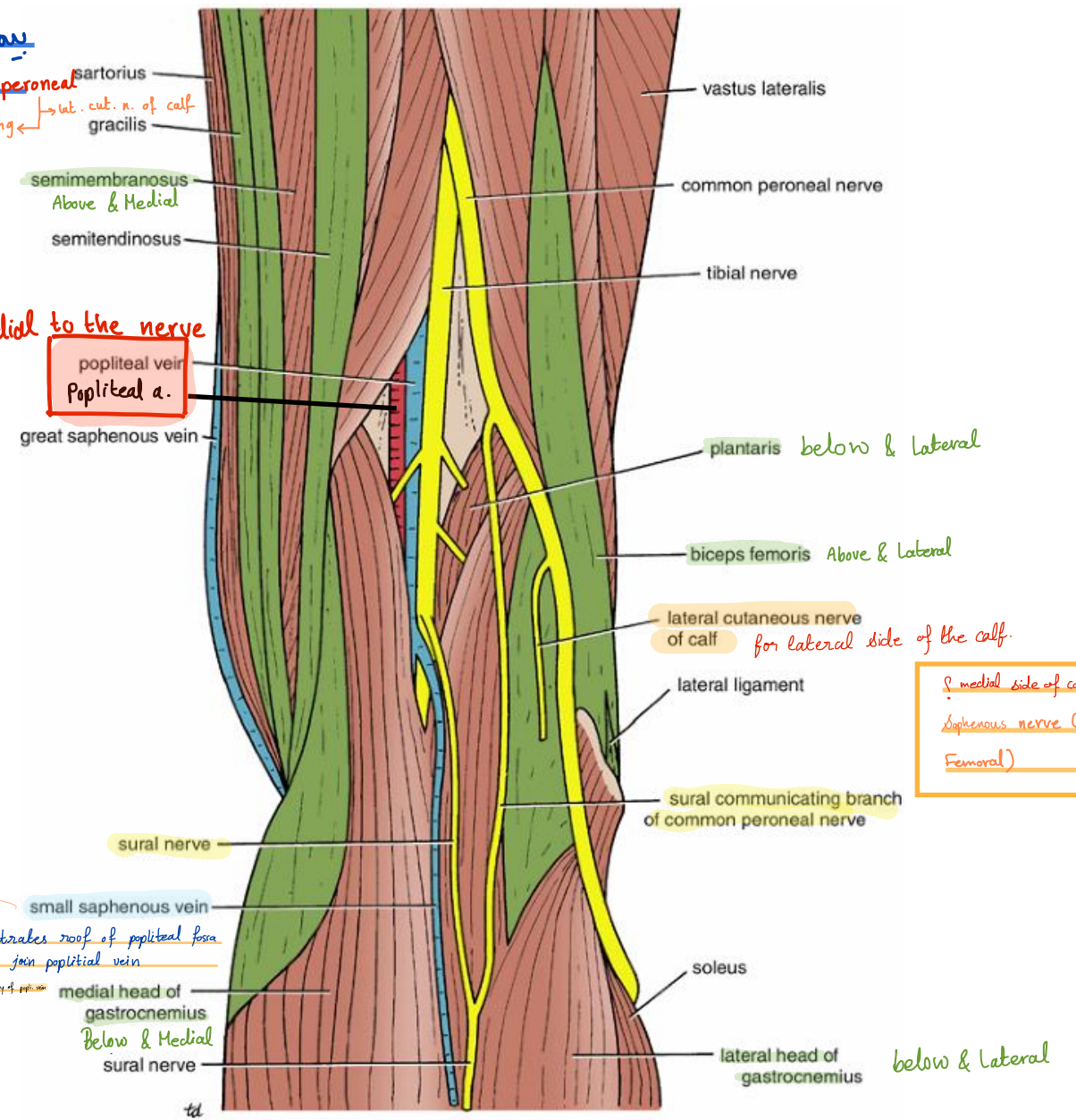
division of sciatic n. 11/12/2011

Tibial ← common peroneal
 ↓ sural → go to back of leg reaches lateral side of the foot (sensory)
 ← sural communicating (sensory) →

medial to the nerve

popliteal vein
 Popliteal a.

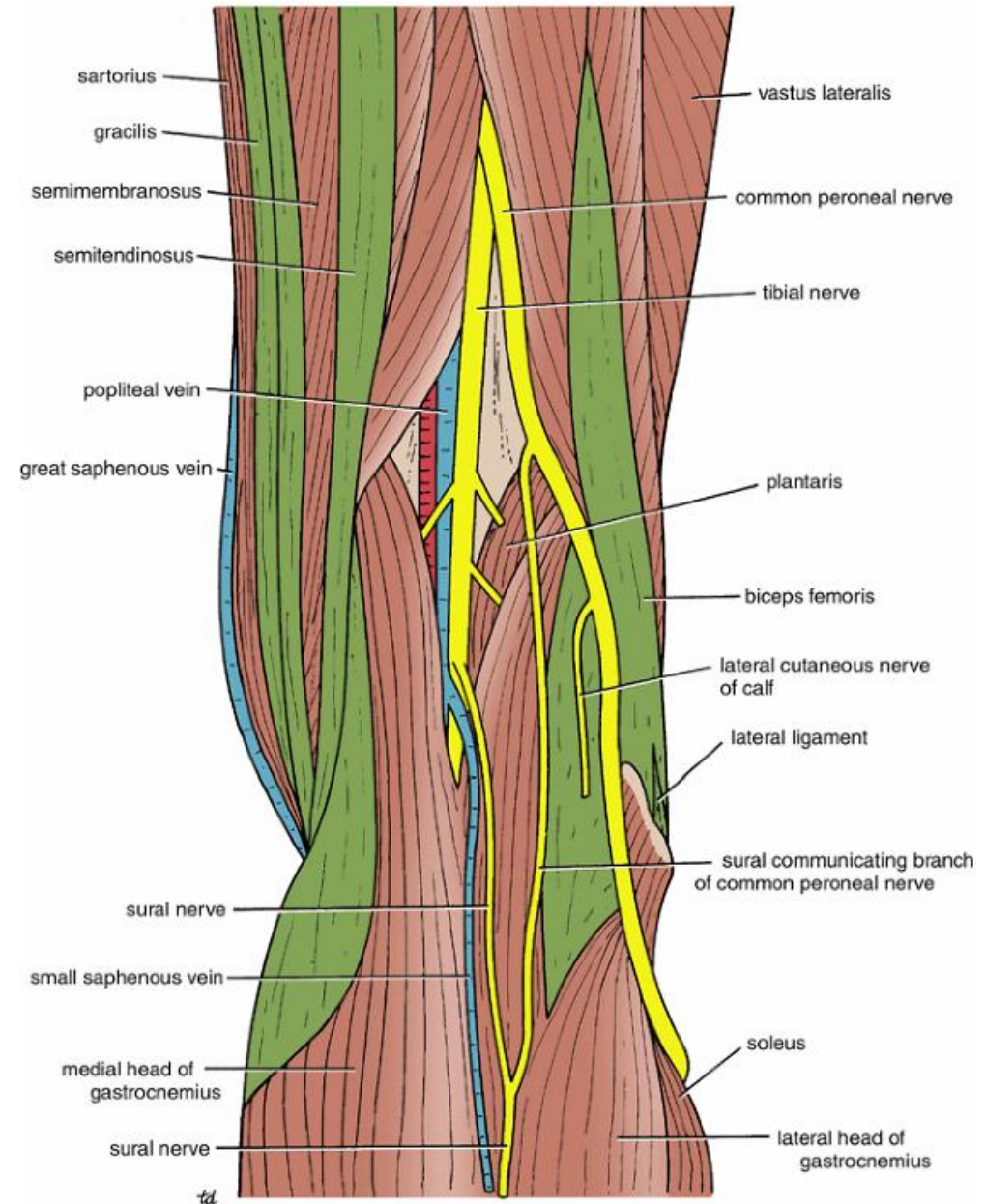
small saphenous vein
 Penetrates roof of popliteal fossa to join popliteal vein
 → boundary of popliteal fossa
 medial head of gastrocnemius
 Below & Medial
 sural nerve



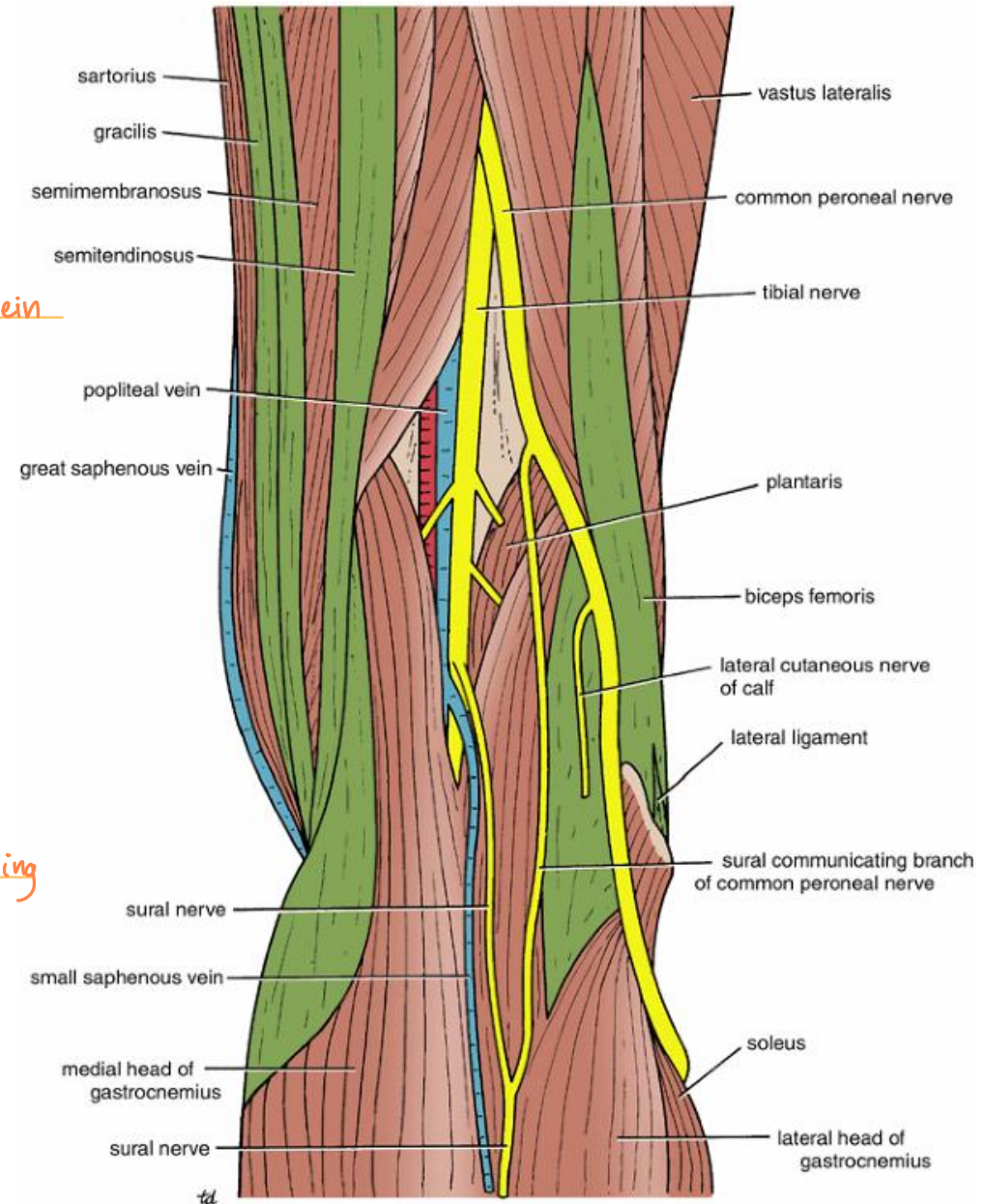
of medial side of calf the sub saphenous nerve (branch of femoral)

Boundaries

- **Laterally:** The biceps femoris above and the lateral head of the gastrocnemius and plantaris below
-
- **Medially:** The semimembranosus and semitendinosus above and the medial head of the gastrocnemius below
- **The anterior wall or floor** of the fossa is formed by the popliteal surface of the femur, the posterior ligament of the knee joint, and the popliteus muscle
- **The roof** is formed by skin, superficial fascia, and the deep fascia of the thigh.

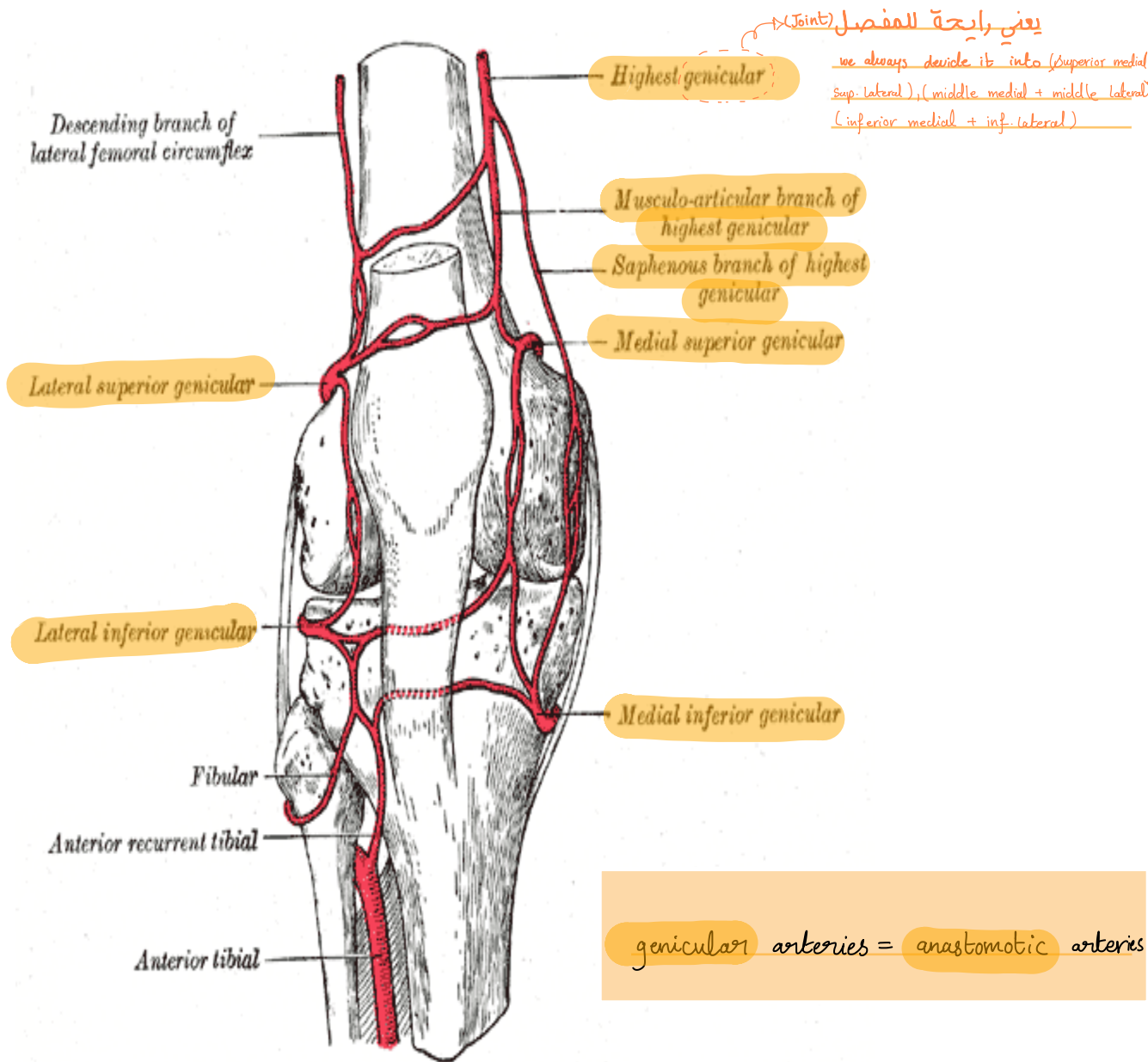


- **It contains :**
- **the popliteal vessels** *Artery + vein*
- **the small saphenous vein** *ends in popliteal*
- **the common peroneal and tibial nerves**
- **the posterior cutaneous nerve of the thigh** *= sural and sural communicating*
- **the genicular branch of the obturator nerve**
- **connective tissue**
- **lymph nodes.**



- **Arterial Anastomosis Around the Knee Joint:**

- To compensate for the narrowing of the popliteal artery, which occurs during extreme flexion of the knee, around the knee joint is a profuse anastomosis of small branches of the femoral artery with muscular and articular branches of the popliteal artery and with branches of the anterior and posterior tibial arteries.



Popliteal vein

Tributaries

- The tributaries of the popliteal vein are as follows:
- Veins that correspond to branches given off by the popliteal artery
- Small saphenous vein, which perforates the deep fascia and passes between the two heads of the gastrocnemius muscle to end in the popliteal vein.
- Genicular veins

Nerve supply of popliteal fossa : Tibial nerve

from superior angle to inferior angle, whereas common peroneal comes laterally (on lateral side)

Action:

- **Medial rotation** of the tibia on the femur or, if the foot is on the ground, lateral rotation of the femur on the tibia.

extension of tibia, extension of femur
(rotation of Femur over Tibia)
(biceps femoris): (lock)

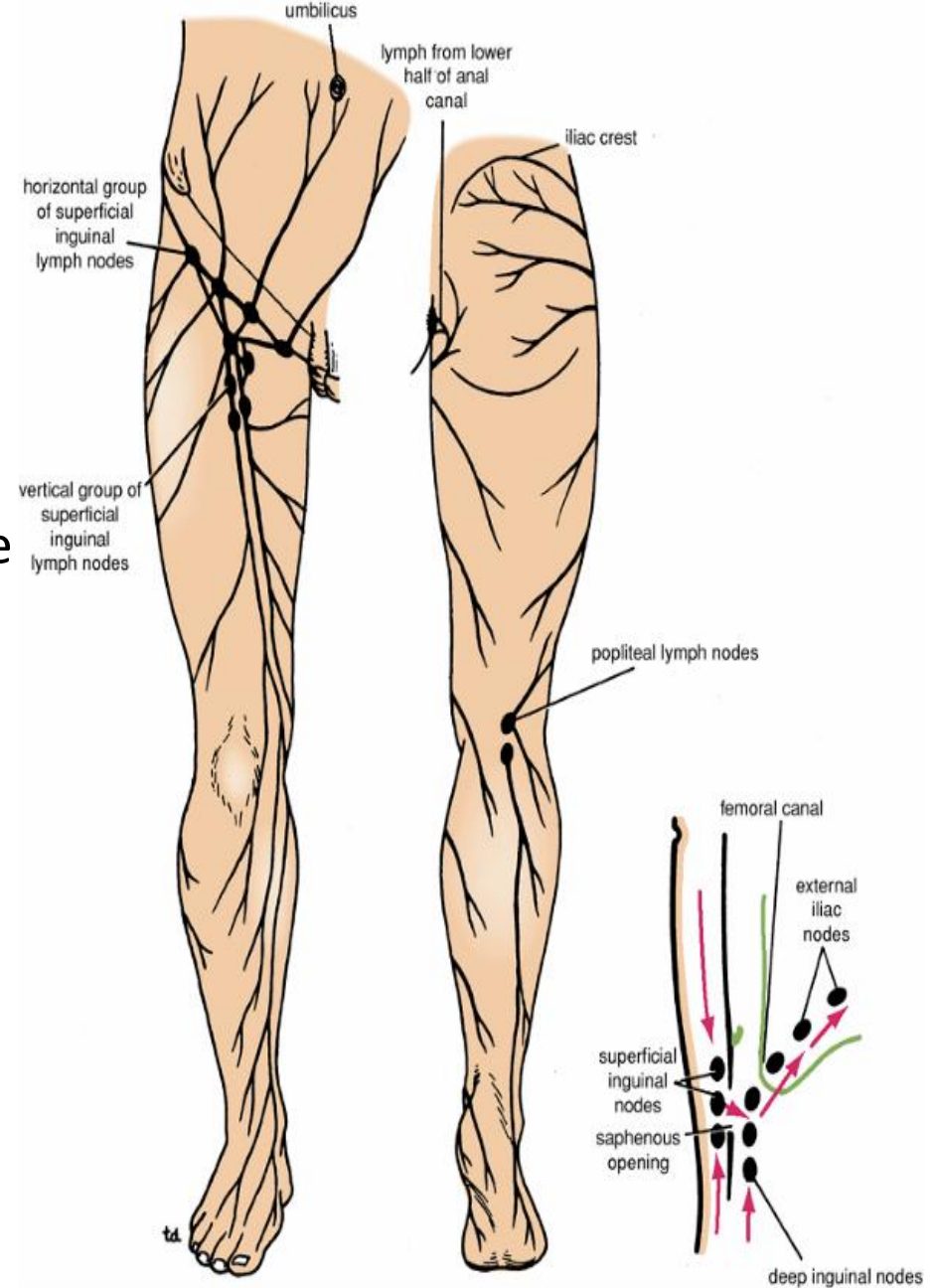
- **The latter action** occurs at the commencement of flexion of the extended knee, and its rotatory action slackens the ligaments of the knee joint; this action is sometimes referred to as unlocking the knee joint.

Unlocking
Done by popliteus muscle

• Because of its attachment to the lateral meniscus, it also pulls the cartilage backward at the commencement of flexion of the knee.

Popliteal Lymph Nodes

- About six lymph nodes are embedded in the fatty connective tissue of the popliteal fossa
- They receive superficial lymph vessels from the lateral side of the foot and leg; these accompany the small saphenous vein into the popliteal fossa.
- They also receive lymph from the knee joint and from deep lymph vessels accompanying the anterior and posterior tibial arteries.



Anatomy and histology

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