

RUNNING INJURIES:

Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome

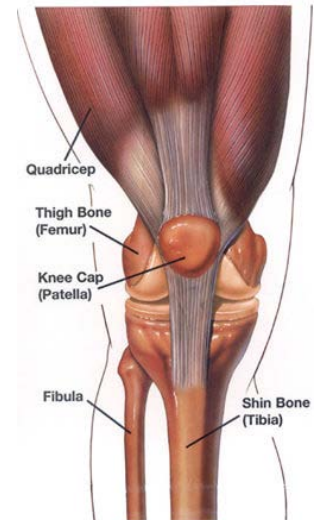
(Pain around the knee cap and/or in the front of the knee also known as "Runner's knee")

WHAT IS IT?

Patellofemoral syndrome refers to pain arising from the joint between the kneecap and the underlying thigh bone. Other names for this condition include patellofemoral syndrome, chondromalacia and runner's knee.

HOW DOES IT HAPPEN?

Patellofemoral syndrome most often results from overuse of the knee. When the knee is bent and straightened, the kneecap (patella) slides up and down within a groove on the end of the thigh bone (femur). With repeated bending and straightening, such as during activities involving walking, running, jumping and cycling, structures around the patella can become irritated. This can result in pain and occasionally swelling



HOW DOES IT FEEL?

The main sensation associated with patellofemoral syndrome is pain. This is felt behind and around the kneecap. Patellofemoral syndrome is commonly aggravated by walking, running, going downstairs or sitting for a prolonged period with a bent knee. Associated with this pain may be grinding noises heard when the knee is bent or straightened, a sensation of the knee giving way and weakness in the knee. The knee may also swell at times.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Patellofemoral syndrome frequently does not get better on its own if the cause is not addressed and you continue your activity or sport. If you have or suspect patellofemoral syndrome, you should consult your nearest physiotherapist. In the meantime, you should avoid any activities which aggravate or cause your knee pain to occur. Icing the front of your knee will be of benefit. Ice should be applied to the injured area for 15-20 minutes every 1-2 hours. Ideally, it should be applied using crushed ice wrapped in a moist cloth or towel.

WHAT SHOULDN'T YOU DO?

If you have or suspect you have patellofemoral syndrome, you shouldn't ignore the problem. This may lead to your problem getting worse such that your pain becomes more severe and is felt more frequently.

ARE THERE ANY LONG TERM EFFECTS?

Patellofemoral syndrome does not produce any long term effects as long as it is properly diagnosed and appropriately treated. Recovery usually takes a number of weeks. During this period you can often keep participating in your activity or sport. In some situations recovery may be prolonged. In these cases, surgery may be required to assist in improving the biomechanics of the kneecap and to relieve pain. This is only performed after conservative or non-surgical treatment has failed to give relief.

TALK TO A PHYSIOTHERAPIST – The assistance of a physiotherapist is important in the treatment of patellofemoral syndrome. Initially, they can assist in diagnosing the problem and establishing the severity of the condition. From this, they will be able to determine an appropriate treatment plan. This may involve initial activity modification, soft tissue treatment such as massage and stretching, taping or bracing of the kneecap and specific knee strengthening exercises to improve knee cap movement (tracking). Your physiotherapist may suggest talking with your doctor about the use of anti-inflammatory medications. Other treatments may include the use of ice or heat and electrotherapeutic modalities like interferential or ultrasound. A physiotherapist will also be able to assess and determine why you developed patellofemoral syndrome and address this during your recovery to prevent reoccurrence when you return to exercise and sport.

Physiotherapists are regulated primary healthcare professionals who help people of all ages and lifestyles gain and maintain their desired level of active living and physical mobility. With their applied knowledge and understanding of the human body in action, physiotherapists are able to help you to increase your mobility, relieve pain, build strength and improve balance and cardiovascular function. Physiotherapists not only treat injuries, they also teach you how to prevent the onset of pain or injury that can limit your activity.

Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome (Runner's Knee) Rehabilitation Exercises



Standing hamstring stretch



Quadriceps stretch



Side-lying leg lift



Quad sets



Straight leg raise



Step-up

To book your appointment today, please call: