

Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome



Polyclinics
SingHealth



*Disclaimer: Please note that the instructions shown are strictly for general information only.
If you have any queries, kindly check with your healthcare provider.*



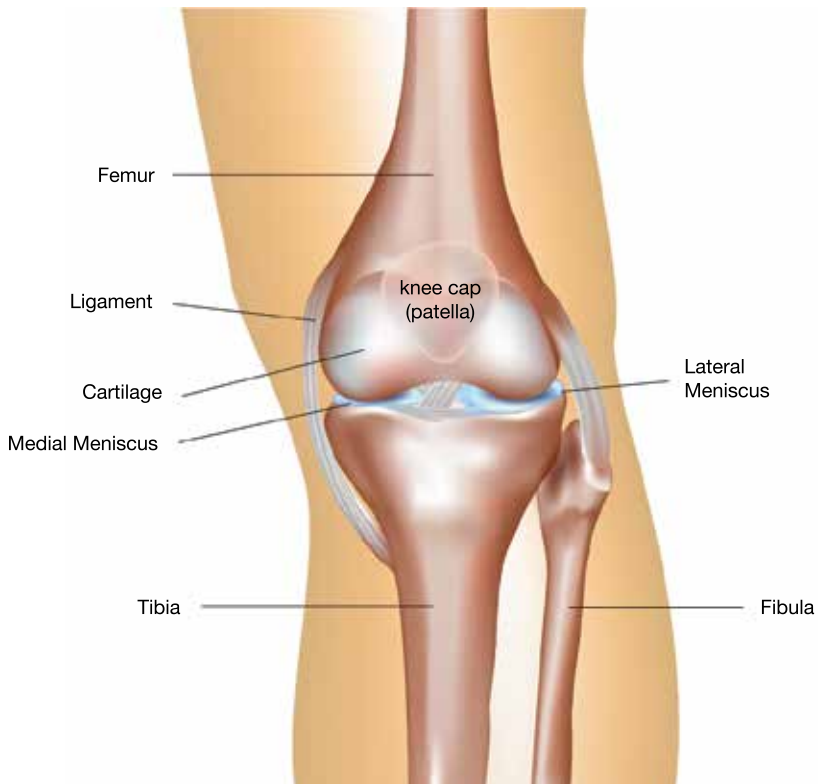
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What is patellofemoral pain syndrome?

Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome (PFPS) is a common condition that causes pain around the knee cap (patella).

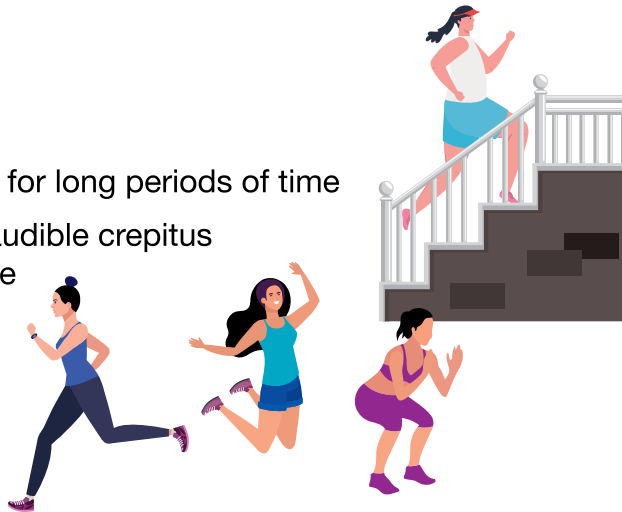
It is also called “anterior knee pain syndrome” or “runner’s knee”, and it affects 1 in 4 active people.



B

What are the signs & symptoms of patellofemoral pain syndrome?

- A dull ache or sharp pain at the front of the knee, especially during:
 - running
 - jumping
 - squatting
 - climbing stairs
 - sitting with the knee bent for long periods of time
- Sensation of grinding and audible crepitus (clicking sounds) of the knee



C

What are the common causes of patellofemoral pain syndrome?

In a healthy knee, the knee cap moves with proper alignment in the groove of the femur (thigh bone) during knee bending.

If the knee cap does not move smoothly, it creates irritation between the knee cap and the femur. This results in pain.

Common reasons that may contribute to PFPS include:

- Weak thigh and gluteal muscles
- Tight muscles and iliotibial band
- Excessive training or lack of proper conditioning of the muscles for sports
- Foot biomechanical problems such as flat feet

D How long does it take to recover?

With proper treatment and rehabilitation, it may take 3-6 months to regain your pre-injury sport performance or activity level.

E You should seek medical attention early if you have...

- Inability to put weight on the affected leg
- Prolonged morning knee stiffness
- A hot swollen knee joint
- Rapid worsening of knee pain
- Onset of numbness or weakness of the lower leg

F Do you need an imaging scan?






Imaging scan is not needed to diagnose Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome. Diagnosis can be made clinically through history and physical examination.

Your doctor may order an X-ray only when necessary to rule out other conditions. Other imaging like ultrasound scan, or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), may be ordered by specialist only if needed.



What are the treatment options?

Depending on the condition, your healthcare provider may recommend:

Activity modification	Physiotherapy	
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• During rehabilitation period, you should reduce repetitive or high impact activities that may worsen the condition, such as running, climbing stairs, hill-training, step aerobics, roller blading and spinning• Adjust your activity to a level that you can comfortably tolerate• You can replace high impact activities with low impact exercises such as cycling, swimming, deep water running or using elliptical trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appropriate exercise programme can help to correct muscles imbalance that affects the knee cap movement. This involves flexibility, strengthening and conditioning exercises for your hip and knee muscles• Sports taping may be used to facilitate exercise without pain	
Podiatry	Medications	Specialist referral
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further assessment and orthotics (insoles) fitting may be required if foot biomechanics contribute to PFPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your doctor may prescribe paracetamol or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) to reduce pain, swelling and inflammation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome usually does not need specialist treatment.• Your doctor will only refer you to see a specialist when necessary for further investigation and treatment.

Simple home exercises:

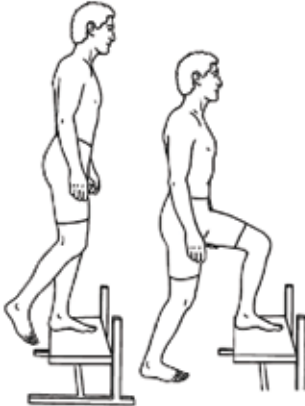
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You may perform these exercises
2-3 times a week:

1. Squats: **10 repetitions x 3 sets**
2. Side-lying leg lift: **Hold 10 seconds, 10 repetitions x 3 sets**
3. Step-ups: **10 repetitions x 3 sets**

[illegible]

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