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Desk of
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Patello-Femoral Pain

Does your knee hurt when you are walking down steps, walking down hills or squatting? Does it hurt after you sit with your knees bent? You could have patello-femoral pain. Pain that occurs in the front of your knee with these activities can be due to overuse, injury, or tracking problems in the area where your kneecap (patella) glides in your thigh (femur). A catching, popping, or grinding sensation with movement is common.

Your patella works as a pulley so that the muscle in the front of your thigh (quadricep) can generate more power. This function allows you to get out of a chair or your car more easily. In addition, it empowers you to have the ability to lift more, if it is working properly.

Your patella is actually embedded in the tendon portion of your quadricep before it connects into your lower leg. It glides in a groove on your femur like a train on a track. If your quadricep is weak your patella doesn't glide evenly in the groove causing pain which can lead to accelerated wear and tear on the joint.

It is important to have proper balance between your quadricep and the

muscles on the back of your thigh (hamstrings). If one is too strong compared to the other, it will place abnormal stress at your knee causing pain.

*Does your knee pop,
catch, or grind?*

*Do you have knee pain
after walking down
steps or squatting?*

Your hip also has an effect on this joint. The muscles on the front and back of your thigh help to straighten and bend your knee like a hinge. The muscles in your hip help to control the side to side motions placed on your knee. This keeps you from being too "knock-kneed" or "bow-legged". This sideways stress causes your kneecap to ride more on the inside or outside of the groove leading to pain. If the back of your hip is weak you can compensate and let your knees travel past your toes when you are squatting down. The pressure between your patella and the groove that it glides in will increase dramatically causing pain and eventual early deterioration of the cartilage in the joint.

article continued inside...

Join us for the Eureka Days Run for Sight-FREE!

Join the **Sports & Physical Therapy Center Team**

at the *Eureka Days Run for Sight!*

The race begins

Saturday, September 10, at 8:00am

The first **25** people to sign up to run/walk with us will receive:

Free Sports & Physical Therapy Center t-shirt

Paid entrance fee

Parking at our office

Free breakfast after the run

Free 10 minute chair massages

We had a lot of fun last year! Join us to make the event even more exciting! Call the office at 636-938-4065 to sign up.

Knee Article Continued...

Likewise, your ankle can affect your knee too. Tightness in your ankle and calf will change the way that the joint works causing increased stress and pressure at the joint. Flat feet or high arches can place abnormal side to side stress in your knee. Orthotics may be recommended to correct for flat feet or high arches to help decrease this side to side stress.

The good news is that something can be done about it! Strengthening your quadricep will cause your patella to sit more in the center of its track like it should and glide in a smooth and controlled fashion. Strengthening your hip will better control the side to side motion placed on your knee. This is especially important for females because of the way that they are built compared to males. Females are more prone to being "knock-kneed". These muscles are important so that you have good knee control when walking, running, or performing lateral movements.

In addition to strengthening muscles, stretching muscles is just as important. Stretching of your calf will help to allow for better ankle motion so that your knee doesn't move past your toes and cause excessive pressure at the joint.

A physical therapist, is the best option to teach you the proper strengthening exercises and stretches to decrease and avoid knee pain. The physical therapist will evaluate your specific situation and determine what is the best course of treatment for your particular needs. The physical therapist is also able to analyze what exactly is causing the problem that is leading to the pain. Is it weakness? If so, in which muscle? Is it tightness or lack of flexibility? If so, in which muscle or joint? Finally, physical therapy often helps patients avoid resorting to surgery to resolve their pain. Contact The Sports and Physical Therapy Center if you have any questions. We can help!

Knee Strengthening Exercises



Straight Leg Raise

Lay on your back with one knee bent. Tighten the top of your thigh on the leg that is straight. Lift your leg keeping it straight as high as your knee that is bent. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 20 times.



Hip Adduction

Lay on your side with your bottom knee bent. Straighten your top leg and lift it toward the ceiling using your hip, not your back. Make sure to keep your leg even with your hip. Repeat 20 times.



Hip Abduction

Lay on your side with your top leg crossed over your bottom leg. Straighten your bottom leg and lift it off of the ground. Repeat 20 times.



Prone Straight Leg Raise

Lay on your stomach. Tighten your gluts then lift your leg. Repeat 20 times.

What Patients are Saying...

"I was a complete mess before I came to see Sean. He has **improved my strength and range of motion so much**. I have a quality of life now. I felt fatigued before therapy and now the exercises have really helped me in every way. Thank you Sean and staff, I am looking forward to seeing you all again." K. L.

"Overall **muscle strength has greatly improved. Endurance and flexibility have also improved.** Thank you!" L. P.

"I love coming to physical therapy. I look forward to coming every day. Since I have started coming I feel that I am 85% better. Everything has gotten so much stronger thanks to my physical therapist. **I love the one on one attention that I get here.**" K. C.

"Before physical therapy I could not do the simple things, like walking through stores, or playing ball with my kids. **Since coming to physical therapy I have been able to do things with my family.** I have been coaching baseball and also helping out with my son's team. Last night I was pitching from the mound to show the kids when to steal and read the pitcher. I am excited about my progress." T.

Featured Patient



Every month we will feature the successes that our patients achieve with the help of our therapists. This month one of Sean's patients, Gordon, was chosen. Like the matching shirts!!!

"I have had spinal problems for decades and have seen my share of physical therapists. Recently I had surgery on my low back. Sean and the folks at the Sports & Physical Therapy Center were the best. They not only got me through a successful rehab, but they helped me fix other issues as well. My gait has improved drastically. My cervical mobility has increased significantly. (I had cervical fusion 22 years ago and have suffered with limited neck movement all these years.) Thank you Sean and thank you Sports & Physical Therapy Center for a job well done."

-Gordon



Do you know anyone who is in pain or struggling to complete their daily activities?

We want to help people live a pain-free life and participate in any activity they desire!

If you know someone that needs our help please share this information with them. For more information about the help The Sports and Physical Therapy Center can provide please share this newsletter, call us at 636-938-4065, or visit our website at www.ptstl.com

There is nothing more rewarding than helping someone you know.

From the Desk of Trainer Brian



HEALTHY LIVING CHECKLIST

- Healthy eating** - remember to eat lots of vegetables and fruit and to reduce your intake of saturated fats and sugars.
- Exercise** - try to do at least 30 minutes of moderate activity a day. You can do a quick check of your fitness and flexibility yourself (these tests indicate minimum levels only)
 - * **To test fitness** - if you can walk up a flight of stairs without getting puffed you are probably in reasonably good cardiovascular shape.
 - * **To test flexibility** - sit on the floor, stretch out your legs keeping them flat on the floor. If you can touch your toes you are probably reasonably flexible.
- Stress** - try to keep stress levels to a minimum. Learn to manage your stress and set time aside to relax.
- Alcohol and Smoking** - limit your consumption of alcohol and choose not to smoke.
- Checkups** - periodically visit your doctor to conduct a health checkup

During the summer we all seem to get a little lazy. Whether it's the hot weather or busy schedules we seem to be less likely to stick with our healthy lifestyles during the summer. We are all guilty of indulging in fast food or the summer barbecue's, spending all of our free time laying around the pool, and not taking time out to exercise. Now that the kids are getting back into school it is time that we refocus on healthy living. I'm a dad of 3 great boys and I understand that this not only happens during the summer but throughout the entire year. You owe it to yourself and your family to get healthy and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Call Trainer Brian for a Free Consultation! 636.938.4065