



## Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine

### Patellofemoral Pain

#### Description

Patellofemoral pain syndrome is commonly known as “runner’s knee” and refers to the wearing away of the cartilage on the back surface of the kneecap. The first indication of this condition is usually a “clicking” or “grating” sound, and the knee pain is under the kneecap. This condition may result from acute injury to the patella or from chronic friction between the patella and the groove in the femur through which it passes during the motion of the knee. Patients with this condition should avoid activities which will cause further damage to the joint.



#### Common signs and symptoms

- General pain in and around the kneecap.
- Pain that is usually worse after activity—this includes running, climbing stairs, or squat exercises.
- Crunching or cracking sound when the knee is bent.
- Swelling in the knee and a “tight” feeling in the knee joint.

#### Causes

- Kneecap is abnormally aligned causing excessive stress and wear on the cartilage of the kneecap.
- Knock—knees
- Fallen arches or flat feet
- Sudden increase in training

*Patellar Tendon Strap*

#### Risk of further injury

- Sports that require sudden explosive quadriceps contraction (jumping, quick starts, or kicking)
- Running sports, especially running down hills
- Poor physical conditioning (strength and flexibility, such as with weak quadriceps or tight hamstrings)
- Flat feet
- Prolonged sitting will become painful for patients with patellofemoral pain
- Knee stiffness (loss of knee motion)
- Further injury can occur with sports that require pivoting, jumping, cutting and changing direction (basketball, soccer, volleyball, tennis) or contact sports (football, rugby)

- Further injury can also occur from poor physical conditioning or improper equipment

Our staff is available 24 hours a day in case you experience a problem after you leave the hospital. During business hours, 8 am to 5 pm, call (859) 323-5533. After hours call (859) 323-5321 and ask for the sports medicine physician on call.

**Notify our office if...**

- **Symptoms get worse or do not improve in 4- 6 weeks despite treatment**
- **New, unexplained symptoms develop (drugs used in treatment may produce side effects)**