

KNEE PAIN

- PATELLOFEMORAL PAIN SYNDROME

RESPONSE
PHYSIO FCP SERVICES

PAIN AT THE FRONT OF THE KNEE AND AROUND YOUR KNEECAP

What is it?

Patellofemoral pain syndrome is a common condition characterised by pain occurring at the front of the knee, around the kneecap. It can be caused by various factors, including weak knee and hip muscles, overuse or sudden changes in activity, previous knee injury/surgery, foot/ankle problems or previous injuries.

The patella (kneecap) lies within the quadriceps tendon, which is attached to the top of the lower leg bone (tibia). The quadriceps muscles straighten the knee.

What are the symptoms of patellofemoral pain?

- **Pain:** Symptoms can range from a dull ache to sharp twinges in the front part of the knee.
- **Noises:** You may experience a feeling or noise when the knee bends and straightens, known as crepitus, which can be normal.
- **Swelling:** Puffiness or swelling around the kneecap may occur.
- **Weakness:** Thigh muscles may feel weak, and you may have episodes of giving way, especially when walking downstairs.

How is patellofemoral pain diagnosed?

The diagnosis is based on your symptoms, the history of the problem, and an examination of your knee. Tests such as X-rays or scans cannot diagnose patellofemoral pain and are often not helpful.

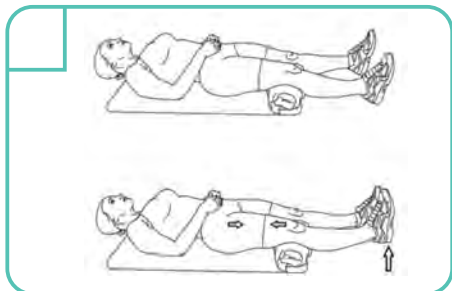
Advice/Treatment

- **Modify activities:** Avoid activities that worsen your symptoms and focus on those that cause little to no pain or discomfort.
- **Stay active:** Engage in activities that cause no pain or only mild discomfort to maintain your overall fitness.
- **Pain relief:** There are many pain-relieving medications that may help. Consult your GP or pharmacist for advice on suitable options.
- **Exercise program:** The ultimate goal of treatment is to improve your capacity to tolerate load through an appropriate exercise program and activity modification.
- **Footwear and arch support:** Consider using suitable footwear or insoles that provide adequate arch support.
- **Maintain a healthy weight:** Being overweight or obese increases stress on your knee joints, increasing the risk of osteoarthritis.
- **Consult healthcare professionals:** It is essential to consult with your healthcare provider or a physiotherapist for a comprehensive evaluation and personalised treatment plan.

If you need further advice or assistance with your condition, please contact your local surgery to book an appointment with your first contact practitioner (physiotherapist).



Exercises which your First Contact Practitioner (Physiotherapist) may recommend:



Inner Range Quadriceps strengthening

Lie on your back, place a rolled up towel under your knee. Tighten your thigh muscle and lift your heel. Pressing your knee against the towel. As your leg straightens, only your foot lifts off the floor.

Hold for:

Repeat:

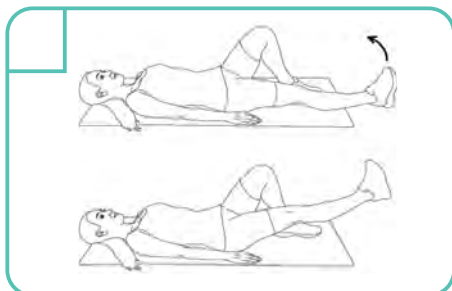


Quadricep stretch

Pull your foot towards your bottom. If you are unsteady on your feet, make sure you hold on to something sturdy like a wall or a table. You will feel a stretch to the quadricep muscles at the front of your thigh.

Hold for:

Repeat:

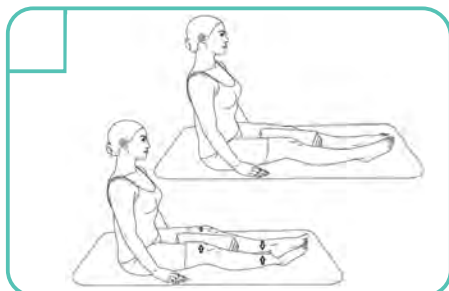


Straight leg raise

Lie on the floor or bed. Bend one knee with your foot resting on the floor or bed. Lift one leg about 10 inches off the floor. Hold, and return to the start position.

Hold for:

Repeat:

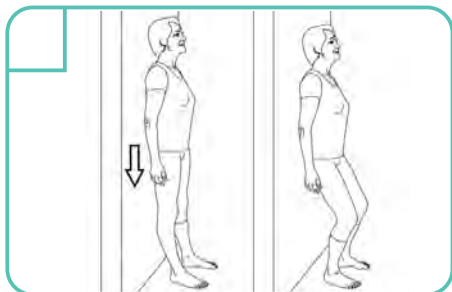


Quadricep strengthening

Long sit on the floor. Place a towel between your thighs. Cross your legs. Squeeze the towel with your thighs as you attempt to lift the bottom leg. The top leg will provide resistance.

Hold for:

Repeat:



Wall squat

Stand with your back resting against a wall, open your legs slightly wider than shoulder width, and bend your knees to the 1/4 squat position.

Hold for:

Repeat: