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Patellofemoral Joint Pain

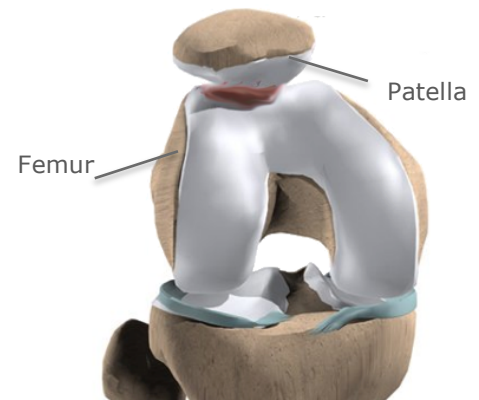
Patellofemoral Pain is an umbrella term used to describe pain that arises from in and around the knee joint, more specifically, between the kneecap and the underlying thigh bone. Patellofemoral pain usually develops gradually with symptoms increasing over time rather than from a sudden incident. Symptoms can often include pain situated on the inside of the knee or behind the knee cap, crunching or grating sensation when bending, pain with prolonged sitting (hence the term 'movie goers knees') and pain with stairs (usually downstairs more than upstairs)

Causative Factors

The patella (kneecap) has grooves on the back of it which are designed to sit on top of the knee joint and slide smoothly as the knee bends. When the kneecap is gliding incorrectly, inflammation or pain can develop behind or around the knee.

Factors that cause incorrect gliding/ suboptimal knee mechanics include:

- Tightness of muscles on the outside of the thigh
- Weakness of muscles on the inside of the knee (VMO: vastus medialis obliques)
- Weakness of the muscles on the outside and back of the hip (gluteus minimus/medius, deep lateral rotators)
- Poor biomechanics either from genetics (flat feet or knocked-knees)
- Poor functional control of the lower limb
- A traumatic injury (usually landing from a fall onto the knees) with pain developing over time



Treatment

Treatment is aimed at correcting the 'tracking' of the kneecap (or knee mechanics). Physiotherapy combines mobilisation, stretching and strengthening exercises of the knee and hip to improve lower limb alignment. Taping and/or bracing can also be incorporated to reduce your symptoms in the initial phase. Orthotic prescription can also be beneficial if foot biomechanics are poor.

At SportsMed Subiaco our Physiotherapists thoroughly examine the entire lower limb to determine the most appropriate management of your knee pain. Our clinicians incorporate a variety of treatment techniques and a range of rehabilitation options, including utilisation of our purpose-built rehabilitation gymnasium.

SportsMed Subiaco

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