



Winston Hills Physiotherapy Centre

43 Langdon Road, Winston Hills NSW 2153

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ANTERIOR KNEE PAIN

What is patellofemoral pain syndrome?

Patella-femoral pain syndrome (PFPS), commonly referred to as 'runners' knee' is an umbrella term encompassing all pathologies that cause pain where the patella (kneecap) comes in contact with your femur (thigh bone). This articulation is what is referred to as the patellofemoral joint.

The cause of PFPS varies but is primarily due to increased patellofemoral joint pressure from poor alignment of the patellar during movement of the knee. Over time this irritates the joint, causing pain.





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How does it happen?

We mainly see this type of pain with a sudden increase in activity. Starting a running program and doing too much too soon is very common. Going on holidays and walking way more than your sedentary job entails is also another common reason. The patella slides up and down in a groove, but this can become irritated with overuse or if knee mechanics mean that the patella does not track properly in the groove.

An imbalance in buttock and/or thigh musculature can contribute to anterior knee pain, as can over pronation in the ankle/foot. Patella-femoral pain is also more prevalent in females, due to their wider pelvis and change of angle of the femur.

What activities aggravate anterior knee pain?

Activities such as running, walking, going up or down stairs, squatting and sitting prolonged with a bent knee can aggravate the pain.



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What can I do about the pain?

Generally, patello-femoral pain does not go away on its own, as once it gets to a certain level, even normal every day activities tend to aggravate it. Manual therapy and a strengthening program to improve the muscles that are weak in the buttock and leg will help to get the patella moving as it should. Taping can be effective in providing short term relief to be able to participate in normal activities with reduced pain. In some cases where foot mechanics are contributing to the pain, orthotic therapy may be indicated.



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Activity modification is also important to reduce the over use at the patella femoral joint. A reduction in playing, training or other aggravating activities is often required to help the pain settle.

Resolution of symptoms may take some time. Muscle strengthening usually takes 4-6 weeks before we see significant enough changes to affect the patella tracking.

If you think you may be suffering from anterior knee pain, give us a call on 9838 8449.