



## **Patello-femoral pain syndrome**

**AKA ... anterior knee pain, patello-femoral chondromalacia**

Patello-femoral pain syndrome is a relatively common knee condition, especially among the athletic population. This condition may involve vague pain in the front of your knee, or sharper pains under the knee cap, or perhaps along one portion of the knee cap perimeter. Sometimes the knee cap is not moving smoothly, which is called abnormal patellar tracking. In this situation, the knee cap may abut the sensitive soft tissues surrounding it, or perhaps excessively compress the underlying tissues such as the cartilage. A combination of factors usually contribute to this condition, including: overtraining (insufficient rest), running inclines, frequent squatting or kneeling, flexibility and/or strength issues, structural problems of the leg, insufficient support of footwear, and exceeding your ideal body weight.

Treatment of this condition can include rest from contributing activities, footwear advice, orthotic shoe inserts, taping or bracing, anti-inflammatory medication, ice application, and physical therapy. As you participate in physical therapy, there are some guidelines which may assist you in the process of recovery. We have put together this helpful handout so that you have access to these guidelines at home, in case you need a little reminding!

### **Do's**

- Use ice, commercial cold packs, or frozen peas to treat the inflammation (10-15 minutes of application - every hour for severe cases, 3 times per day for even mild cases).
- Wear supportive footwear such as a good walking, hiking, or athletic shoe.
- Sit with your knee in a more extended position, if you need to sit long periods.
- Stretch leg muscles thoroughly before exercising or performing activities such as cleaning your home or gardening.

### **Don'ts**

- Try to avoid or at least limit contributing activities such as kneeling, deep squatting, lunging, stair climbing, incline running or walking, and sitting with knees bent 90 degrees or more. At the gym, avoid the leg extension machine.
- Avoid walking in high heels.
- Avoid standing with knees locked back (hyperextended).