



Patella-Femoral Syndrome

Patella-femoral syndrome is a very common knee complaint. The syndrome is usually caused by irritation and degeneration (breaking down) of the cartilage underneath the kneecap (patella), as well as inflammation of the soft tissue surrounding the knee. The cartilage normally allows for smooth movement of the patella, once this is interrupted inflammation and pain may result. You may experience catching, clicking, or a sensation of the knee giving way.

Treatment will focus on reducing the inflammation, decreasing the pain, pinpointing and addressing the aggravating factors. Treatment will incorporate a combination of modalities (ex. ice, acupuncture), stretches, and strengthening exercises. Shoe orthotics may be prescribed to correct contributing body biomechanics (the movement of your body).

The therapeutic modalities commonly used include:

Ultrasound: uses sound waves and may be used to decrease scar tissue, increase blood flow, or decrease pain.

Interferential Current: uses electrical current to decrease pain, can also be used to elicit muscle contraction and decrease swelling.

Acupuncture: uses small, solid needles to encourage healing, reduce pain, and improve function of affected areas of the body.

What can you do at home?

Rest: by decreasing your activity you allow your body a chance to heal itself. When you start to feel better it is important to ease back into activities which might be aggravating. Listen to your body - pain means that you have done too much.

Ice: ice decreases the metabolism of your cells so that they do not die despite a decrease in oxygen to the injured area. Ice should be kept on for approximately 15 minutes, several times a day. The injured area should be elevated (above the level of your heart) at the same time. Use a wet towel between the ice and your skin to protect against frostbite. You can use frozen veggies, cold packs, or real ice.

