

RUNNERS KNEE

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What is Runner's Knee?

Runner's knee, or patellofemoral pain syndrome, is a collective term for pain in the front of the knee. It can occur when the kneecap (patella) tracks abnormally along the thigh-bone (femur), from a low-energy impact to the knee, thinning cartilage on the kneecap, or from general overuse of the knee.

What Symptoms Indicate Runner's Knee?

Symptoms of runner's knee can include pain and tenderness around the kneecap. This pain can either be directly on your kneecap, to either side of your kneecap, or feel like it is coming from behind your kneecap. There may be pain when running or following a run workout. Another characteristic sign of runner's knee is pain when walking downstairs or walking down a hill.

How Do You Know You Have Runner's Knee and Not Something More Severe?

Physical examination by a doctor along with X-Rays and possibly a MRI of the knee can be used to detect other injuries of the knee such as meniscus tears or ACL tears.

How Can Runner's Knee Be Treated?

Runner's knee is a common overuse injury for young athletes. It is therefore important to allow the knee time to rest if you are diagnosed with runner's knee. A period of rest from exercises involving the affected knee can sometimes help the pain subside. A common guideline to follow is to avoid things that cause the knee pain. The pain exists for a reason; it is your body telling you to rest the knee until symptoms improve.

Runner's knee can be due to weakness in the quadriceps muscle. This weakness can cause the patella to be loose and rub against the femur. Attending physical therapy can be a great way to help build muscle in the leg, which may be necessary for the kneecap to track smoothly along the femur.

If physical therapy does not improve symptoms in the knee possible further testing with a MRI of the knee may be necessary to rule out more serious injuries in the knee. It is therefore recommended to return for a follow up to the Doctor if symptoms of runner's knee do not improve with physical therapy.