

Runner's Knee: Not Just for Runners



Do you feel pain in your knee when you go down stairs, kneel, squat or sit with your knees bent for long periods of time? Even if you seldom run, these are all symptoms of **patellofemoral pain**, also known as “**runner's knee**.”

The patella (kneecap) is a delicate structure where several muscles converge. Because it goes up and down, tilts and rotates, it's easy to “overload” the knee's capabilities. **Pain in the front of the knee can be the result of many factors:** flat feet, high-arched feet, injury, inflexibility, muscle weakness, misalignment of the kneecap, and excessive training or overuse. All of these can cause varying degrees of knee pain.

If you have sudden knee pain, stop your activities and apply the “RICE” principle:

- **Rest:** Reduce your activity.
- **Ice:** Apply ice for 10 to 20 minutes.
- **Compression:** Wear a support bandage that can support your knee without being too restrictive and decreasing your circulation.
- **Elevation:** Keep your knee raised above your heart to reduce swelling and fluid accumulation.

We can help you identify what activities cause the pain and suggest alternatives to help relieve or decrease stress to the knee. We may also recommend specific exercises to help **strengthen your muscles**, particularly the quadriceps, to improve function. Proper footwear and orthotic devices that help support and position the foot may reduce knee pain. To prevent recurrences, keep these simple steps in mind:

- **Stay in shape:** Warm up and condition yourself. Losing weight if you are overweight helps control the pressure on the knee.
- **Stretch:** Loosen the muscles around the knee before exercising.
- **Build your routine gradually:** Give your body time to build its strength.
- **Wear proper footwear:** This can help prevent injuries.
- **Learn proper form:** We can help you properly execute any exercise program to achieve maximum satisfaction while minimizing discomfort.