

Patellofemoral syndrome

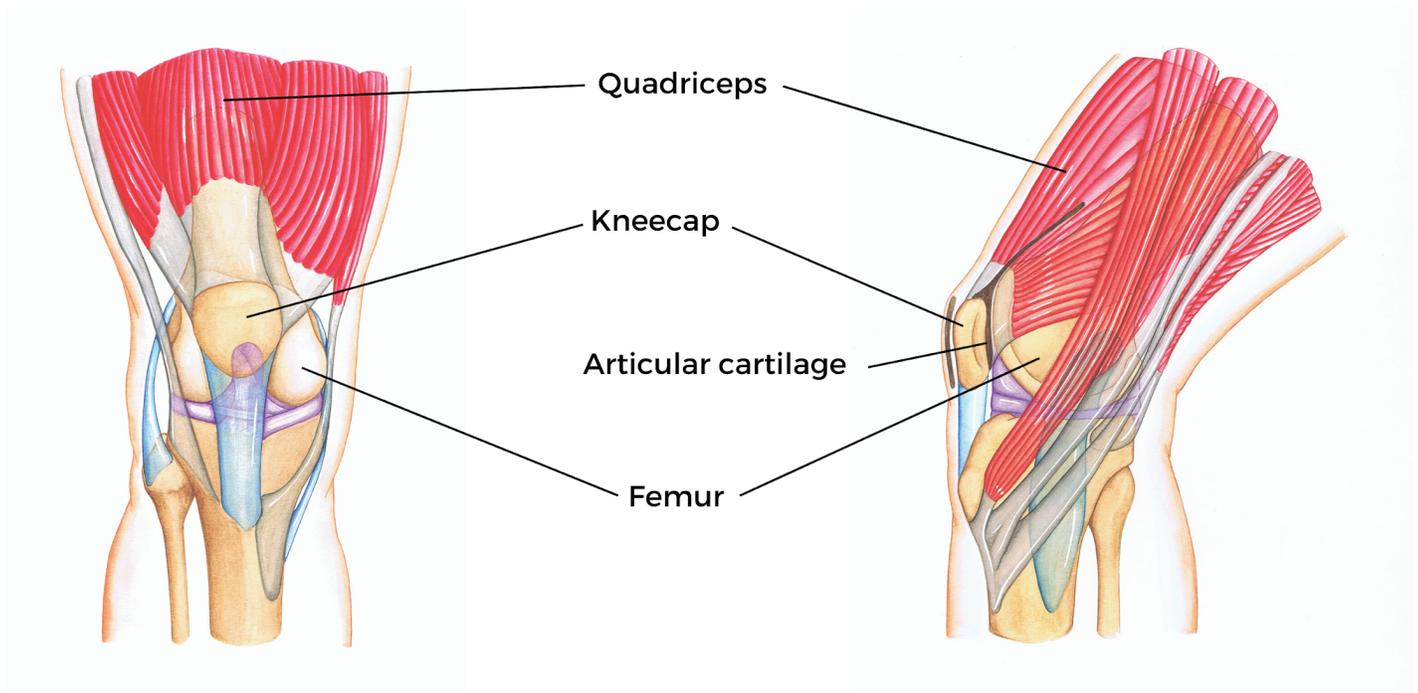
Patellofemoral syndrome is an irritation of the articular surface between the kneecap and the femur, your thigh bone, that causes pain under and around the kneecap.

Climbing stairs, running and walking for a prolonged period of time often increases pain. Pain can also be felt after sitting for a long time or squatting.

Patellofemoral pain is more prevalent among young women than men, and more prevalent in the active population.

Structures involved

Generally, the **articular cartilage** of your **kneecap** and **femur** are involved. A weakness of your **quadriceps**, mostly the internal portion, can be a risk factor. Research also demonstrated the involvement of the fat tissue around your kneecap as a source of pain.



Signs & Symptoms that you may experience

Everyone will react differently after an injury and recovery will depend on the severity of it. Patellofemoral syndrome can cause, but is not limited to, pain at the front of the knee, difficulty with weight-bearing and squatting and sometimes swelling. Pain can also irradiate under and around the knee. Creaking or grinding sensations can occur during physical activity.

Recovery

Your rehabilitation plan, health, fitness & nutritional status will affect recovery speed. Most of the time, you can expect to recover fully from a patellofemoral syndrome. As a rule of thumb, this condition can take up to three months to fully recover.

► WHAT TO DO

Early Stage

Relative rest is a good way to protect your knee and prevent further damage, but it's important to avoid overprotecting your injury. A few days rest with a reduction of activities might be necessary. A quick but progressive return to weight-bearing during your activities of daily living and light cardiovascular exercise that doesn't cause pain will allow better recovery.

Rehabilitation

Follow your practitioner's advice. It will help you manage the different phases of the recovery process and will increase the likelihood of successful rehabilitation. Your practitioner will assist you during your rehabilitation program in order to regain range of motion, strength, endurance and functional status.

As per the principles of rehabilitation for a patellofemoral syndrome, adjusting the volume and intensity of your physical activities is a very important piece for a functional rehabilitation. For this condition, a progressive exercise program performed over a few months period is pretty standard.

► WHAT TO AVOID

Don't rely on passive treatment only. Each phase of the rehabilitation process is important. Patients that are actively involved in their treatment plan tend to recover faster. Keep in mind that pain is not always a good indicator of tissue damage. As soon as you feel better and the pain is well managed in collaboration with your therapist, you should reintroduce light mobility and strengthening exercises as tolerated.
