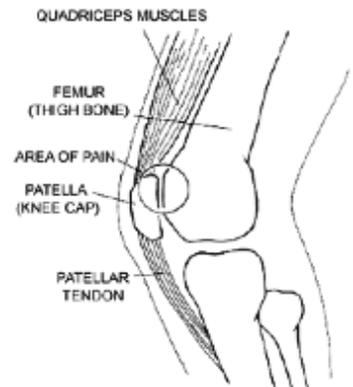


## Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome

### What is patellofemoral pain syndrome?

Patellofemoral pain syndrome is the most common cause of knee pain in the adolescent population. It is caused by an imbalance of forces controlling the patella (knee cap) and how it moves during bending and extending the knee joint. Risk factors can include overuse, trauma, flat feet, or lack of strength and flexibility in the muscles surrounding the knee.

This injury is also referred to as runner's knee.



### Signs and symptoms of patellofemoral pain syndrome:

- Pain, ranging from mild to severe located in front of the knee or around the knee cap
- Joint swelling
- Popping or grinding sensation
- Increased pain with activity, sitting with knees in a bent position for too long, squatting and going up and/or down stairs or hills

**Potential Treatment Options for Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome** There are phases of rehabilitation for patellofemoral pain syndrome. The length of time in each phase will vary. Your healthcare provider will discuss with you if a prescription for formal physical therapy is indicated versus a self-directed home or school program.

- Rest
- Ice (20 minutes at a time, as needed for pain)
- Brace
- Ace wrap
- Anti-inflammatory such as ibuprofen or Aleve
- Elevation (keep the injured leg elevated above your heart)
- Exercises and stretching to increase flexibility and restoring range of motion
- Low impact aerobic training such as walking, riding a bike, elliptical or swimming

**What is the recovery time for Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome?** Recovery time will vary from patient to patient. Age, health, previous injuries and severity of symptoms will affect recovery time. Another factor that determines recovery time is the patient's compliance with the exercise program and other recommendations made by the physician. **You may return to full activities once you have full range of motion of the ankle, minimal pain, full strength and you can perform sport specific skills at full speed and have been cleared by your physical therapist or physician.**

### References:

Children's Hospital Colorado Sports Medicine Program for young athletes  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Medical Society of Sports Medicine