

## For pain at the front of your knee

Anterior knee pain, or patellofemoral pain, is an umbrella term associated with pain under or around the patella (knee cap). Pain is often caused by an imbalance of the muscles that surround and support the knee; this can alter the load and positioning of the patellofemoral joint. Also known as runner's knee. Treatments include rest, ice, exercise and physiotherapy. Surgical intervention is only very rarely needed.

### What can I do to help?

**Rest:** It is usually best to try to carry out your normal activities in small amounts, you mustn't overdo it. You need to take things slowly, pace your activities and avoid movements that make your pain worse.

**Heat or Ice:** If your knee is swollen and inflamed (warm to the touch) applying an ice pack may be helpful for reducing pain and swelling. A packet of frozen peas wrapped in a tea towel works well as an ice pack. Leave the peas in place for no more than 20 minutes at a time. This can be repeated several times a day. Using a heat pack or hot water bottle against the area of pain in your knee can help settle symptoms. Apply for up to 20 mins. Wrap in a tea-towel to prevent burns.

**Pain relief:** Simple painkillers (like paracetamol) or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, NSAIDS, (like ibuprofen) are available over the counter and can be very effective but don't use them for more than 2 weeks without seeking medical advice. You should carefully read the Patient Information Leaflet that is provided with this medication.

It is advisable to consult your GP or pharmacist before taking additional pain relief if you are currently:

- taking any form of medication
- have any other pre-existing medical conditions
- pregnant

**Exercise:** Try the following exercises while waiting for your physiotherapy appointment. These exercises may make your knee pain worse at first but this will get better over time. Please stop any exercises that make your pain considerably worse.

### Exercises to try:

Please try each one 10-15 times, 2-3 times a day. These exercises may make your knee pain worse at first but this will get better over time. Please stop any exercises that make your pain considerably worse.

### 1. Static Quadriceps



Lying on your back on the floor or your bed with both legs out straight.

Push one knee down into the surface and contract your thigh muscle.

### 2. Straight Leg Raise



Lie on your back.

Point your toes up towards you then lift your leg, keeping your knee straight. Slowly bring your leg back down.

Repeat for 3 sets of 12 repetitions.

If just the weight of your leg is too easy, you can add weight around your ankle with ankle weights or a shopping bag filled with cans of beans tied around your ankle.

### 3. Bridge



Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Cross your arms over your chest.

Tilt your pelvis so that your lower back is pressing into the bed then lift your hips up towards the ceiling by squeezing your buttock muscles.

Lift your hips until there is a straight line between your knees and shoulders or as high as you can.

Slowly lower back down to starting position.