

Move To The Front Of The Knee

We have spent the last two weeks covering a common problem in the back of the knee. Baker's cyst. I hope you didn't forget already.

Pain in the front of the knee is much more common than Baker's cyst in the back of the knee.

Doctors call it anterior knee pain, which of course is a general term of direction. It isn't a diagnosis.

The pain is usually somewhat vague and hard to locate to an exact spot on one side or the other. If a person has torn cartilage they often point to a particular spot. Not only is the location vague, but the onset of symptoms is also. Typically a patient has sat for a couple of hours in a movie or riding in a car. They get out and reach for their kneecap and say "ouch". It can feel sore and stiff for a short time, but after the person moves around a bit the pain seems to improve greatly. Sometimes the pain is there when sitting with the knee bent.

Pain in the kneecap area is a common problem. The doctor term is patellofemoral pain. Patients say "my kneecap hurts". We know what they mean.

It may be due to any number of factors.

One of the really common causes of kneecap area pain is chondromalacia, or roughening of the surface under the kneecap that is supposed to be really slippery.

There is a good article on my website www.orthopodsurgeon.com that is entitled "What the Heck is Chondromalacia". You might want to look it up to learn more.

Knee Mechanics

The knee acts like a hinge, a pivot and shock absorber to some extent.

The patella (kneecap) slides in a groove in the front of the femur as the knee bends and straightens. The kneecap is kept in it's track by the groove, muscles, tendons and ligaments.

If for some reason the patella's balance is upset it can lead to increased stress under the patella. More activity usually leads to more pain and the cycle continues.

Patellar Misalignment Causes

These may include flat feet, hip muscle weakness, leg length difference, tight muscles around the knee, weak quad muscles and arthritis.

Treatment

Ice the knee 15 - 20 minutes

Take Tylenol or Advil

Try a knee sleeve

Do exercises

Exercises are probably the most important. A simple exercise program can be seen at the end of the website (www.orthopodsurgео.com) article about chondromalacia.

I also have copies at the Lakeview Clinic. The Physical Therapy department at Lakeview Community Wellness Center is a wonderful source for information about exercises for the knee.

All Orthopaedic Surgery problems can be evaluated by Dr. Haverbush at the Lakeview Community Wellness Center in Lakeview or at the office in Alma at 315 Warwick Dr., Alma, Michigan.

Please call 989-463-6092 for information or to schedule an appointment.

Future Lakeview Community Wellness Center Clinic dates are October 3 and 17.

Please don't forget there is wealth of accurate information about kneecap problems and all the other Orthopaedic conditions I treat on the office teaching website www.orthopodsurgеоn.com. Please log on and check it out.

We are happy to answer questions from readers. You can email me at orthopodsurgеоn@hotmail.com or write to me at 315 Warwick Dr., Alma, Michigan 48801.

Our goal is simple - To help people return to more pain free functional lives.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush

