

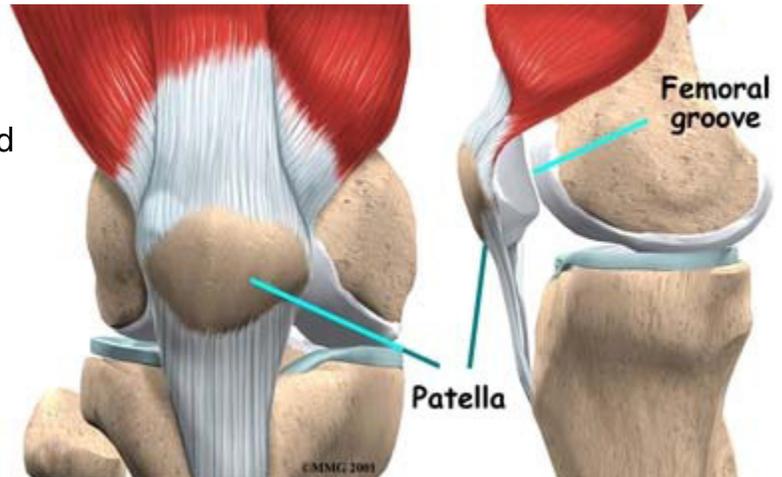


OPTIMA  
SPORTS  
MEDICINE

# Patellofemoral pain syndrome

## What is the patellofemoral joint?

Your knee actually has three separate joints, one of which is the patellofemoral joint. It is the joint between the patella and the thigh bone (femur). The patella sits in a groove in the femur. It is quite mobile and moves within the joint as your knee moves.



## How is the joint injured?

Patellofemoral pain usually occurs when there is excess movement of the patella within the femoral groove. The most common pattern of abnormal movement is when the patella moves too far toward the outside of your knee with function. This excess movement can cause irritation of the joint and some of the structures surrounding it. Symptoms will usually gradually increase as the irritation progresses.

## What causes the excess movement of the patella?

It is most common that the structures on the outside of the knee are tight and the muscles on the inside of the knee are weak and unable to counteract the pull of the tight structures. Poor control of your hip and foot can also exacerbate the excess movement of the patella. Assessment of your lower limb structure and function is essential if you experience any lower limb pain.

## What can be done to improve my pain?

Your physiotherapist can perform manual therapy to lengthen the tight lateral structures on the outside of your knee. They can also provide you with progressive exercises to strengthen the muscles on the inside of your knee and the muscles in your hip and foot. Your physiotherapist may also apply sports taping to control the movement of the patella. Orthotics may be prescribed to help control excessive foot motion. Ice and relative rest may also be prescribed.

## How long will it take for the pain to go away?

Improvement of patellofemoral pain is individual but usually responds well to 3-4 weeks of physiotherapy. Your physiotherapist will explain to you how to manage your own symptoms should they recur.