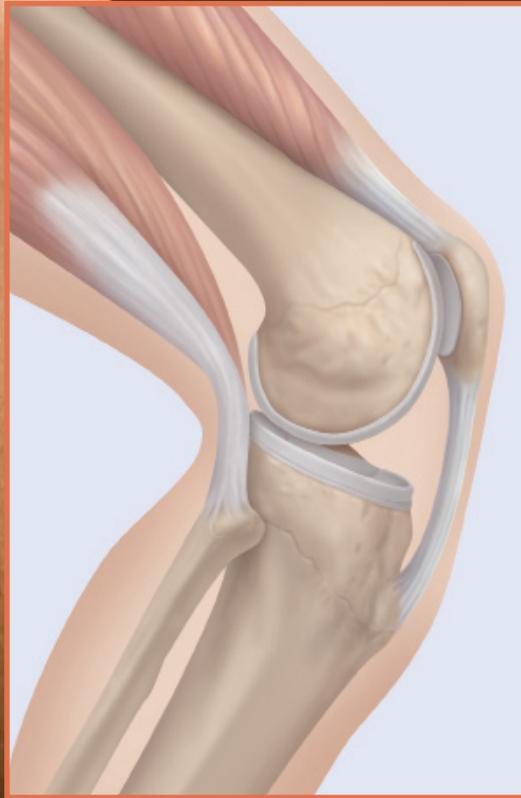


Osgood-Schlatter Disease

Understanding
Knee Pain in
Young People



Understanding Osgood-Schlatter Disease

Osgood-Schlatter disease is a painful knee problem that can occur in active young people. It almost always gets better with rest and simple treatment. But you have a role to play. This product will help you learn about Osgood-Schlatter disease. It also shows you how to get back to your usual activity.

What Are the Symptoms?

If you've felt a sharp pain below your kneecap while being active, you may have Osgood-Schlatter disease. This is a painful bump that forms just beneath the knee. It can occur in one or both knees. Other symptoms include:

- A dull ache in your knee while at rest
- Tenderness and swelling below the kneecap

Who Develops This Problem?

Osgood-Schlatter disease most often occurs in boys who are 11 to 15 years old. But younger boys and some girls can have it, too. Osgood-Schlatter disease is usually caused by overusing the knee. That's why many kids who play sports that involve running or jumping develop this problem. Sports that are hard on the knees include basketball, soccer, football, or gymnastics.

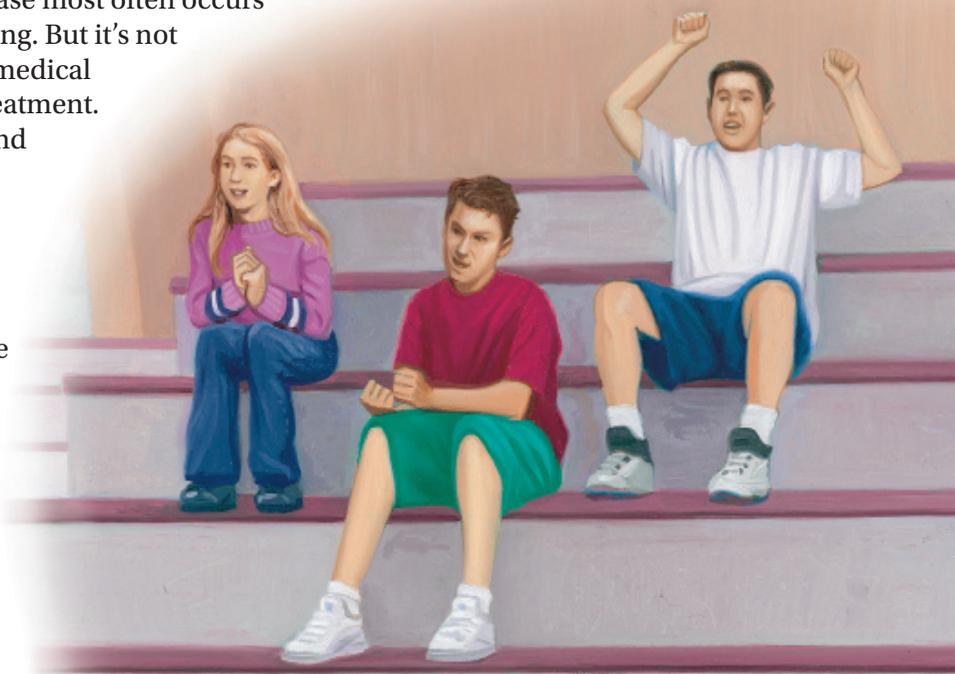




“When the season began, my knee hurt too much to play. But after resting it for a while, I’m starting on the first string.”

Rest Is the “Ticket”

Osgood-Schlatter disease most often occurs while you’re still growing. But it’s not “growing pains.” It’s a medical problem that needs treatment. By resting your knee and briefly changing your activity, you will most likely get better. You may also have to wear a special strap around your knee. Only in rare cases will you need further treatment to heal. Just focus on giving your knee a little time and a lot of rest.



Note to Parents

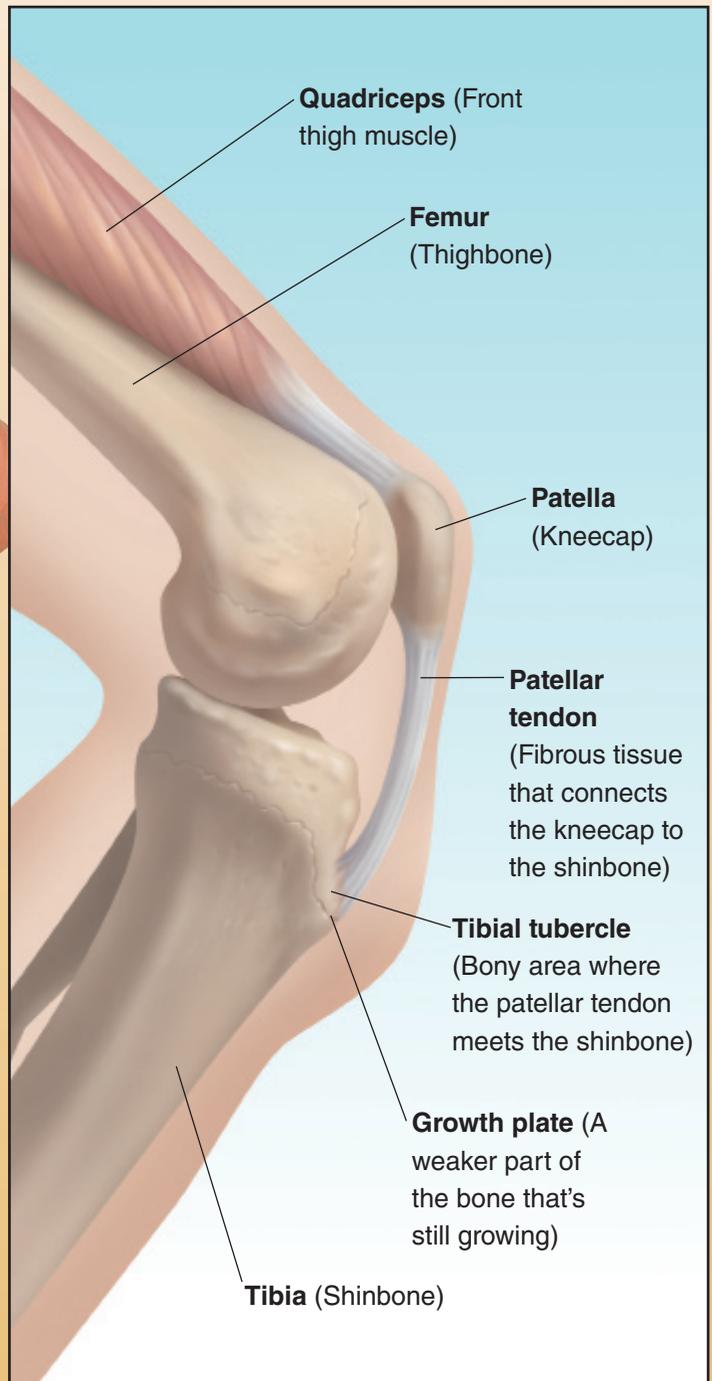
Osgood-Schlatter disease may briefly slow your child down. But the knee often heals completely with self-care. It’s crucial that your child rest his or her knee. Rest speeds healing and helps keep the problem from getting worse. Taking care of it now may prevent the need for corrective knee surgery in adulthood. Call your child’s doctor if you have any questions or concerns about Osgood-Schlatter disease.

Learning About Your Knee Problem

Your knee is a complex joint with many parts. These parts work together to give you the flexibility and motion needed for walking, running, and jumping. But with Osgood-Schlatter disease, knee pain can leave you on the sidelines.

A Knee with Osgood-Schlatter Disease

When your leg moves, the thigh muscle pulls the kneecap. Next, the kneecap pulls a tough band of connective tissue. This tissue then pulls on a bony lump at the top of your shinbone. In some kids, all that pulling can cause Osgood-Schlatter disease. This is because the pulling occurs in an area of the bone that's still growing. As a rule, growing parts of a bone are weaker than other parts. This makes the growing area more likely to get injured.



Working with Your Doctor

With a simple exam, your doctor can often tell whether you have Osgood-Schlatter disease. If you do, you'll most likely just need to rest the knee. But in rare cases, you may need more treatment.

Diagnosing the Problem

Your doctor will check the knee for swelling, tenderness, and a painful bump just below the kneecap. He or she may hold your leg securely as you try to straighten it. X-ray (imaging) tests may later be done to confirm the problem.



Your doctor will look for a painful bump just below the kneecap.



A brace or a cast may be used to help your knee heal.

If Your Problem Is Severe

Sometimes, resting your knee isn't enough to make it better. You may need further medical treatment. **Immobilization** is treatment that keeps you from moving the knee. You may wear a brace or a cast for a few weeks. During that time, you'll walk with crutches. Later, you'll need to regain flexibility and strength in your knees and legs. You can then ease into your normal routine. But if your knee hurts, rest it until you feel better.

Getting Your Knee Back in Shape

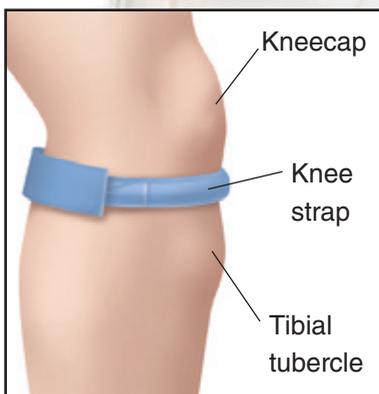
How soon your knee gets better is up to you. Resting and icing it, and perhaps wearing a special knee strap, will help you heal. Stretching and strengthening your legs are then key as you ease into activity again.

Giving Your Knee a Rest

When it comes to how much you should rest the knee, let pain be your guide. If you feel a lot of pain, stay off the knee as much as you can. Avoid jumping, walking up or down stairs, or doing activities that cause pain. If your pain is mild, try swimming or other sports that don't put as much stress on the knee. As the pain lessens, ease into your normal routine.

Reducing Pain and Swelling

If the pain and swelling really bother you, trying icing your knee for 10 to 15 minutes a few times a day. Also, over-the-counter medicine may help reduce swelling. Be sure to first ask your doctor what kind of medicine to take. Medicine that contains aspirin can cause complications if you have some other illnesses. Your doctor can give you the details.



Wearing a Knee Strap

Your doctor may give you a special knee strap to wear. It can relieve some of the pressure on your knee. You can wear it when playing sports and even when just walking around. Wear the strap right below your kneecap but above the bump formed by the tibial tubercle.

When to Call the Doctor

After a few weeks of self-care, your knee should feel better. But let your doctor know if the pain gets worse or if it doesn't go away with rest.

Regaining Flexibility and Strength

Certain exercises can help you regain flexibility and strength. Work out both legs. Your knee may feel stiff at first. But you shouldn't feel pain. A warm shower before exercising can loosen you up. Hold each exercise for 10 seconds and repeat it 10 times. If you can do this without feeling pain, you're ready to ease into your normal routine. But if you feel pain, stop exercising and rest your knee for a few more days.

Flexibility

Quadriceps Stretch

Stand an arm's length away from a wall. Place one hand against the wall. Bend your leg up and behind you and grasp your ankle with the other hand. Lift your ankle until you feel the stretch in your thigh.



Hamstring Stretch

Sit on the floor with one leg straight out. Bend the other leg. Place the foot of the bent leg against the knee of the straight leg. Lean forward, keeping your back straight. Stop when you feel the stretch in the thigh of the straight leg.



Strength

Wall Slide

Stand with your back and head against a wall. Relax your shoulders. Keep your feet at least 12 inches from the wall. Try to slide down to a near-sitting position. Hold for 10 seconds. Then slide back up.



Straight Leg Raise

Sit on the floor with one leg bent and the other leg straight. Point the toes of the straight leg up, tighten your thigh, and raise the leg. Hold for 10 seconds. Then slowly lower the leg.



In the Game Again

Once you're back to your normal activities, stay aware of how your knee feels. If something makes it hurt, rest as needed. And if your doctor gives you a knee strap, wear it when being active. By taking these simple steps, you can get back into the game.



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