

# Dr. Colin Gage

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*"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"*

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## Patellofemoral Syndrome

Do you have pain in the front of your knee after sitting in a car or at the theater? Does the area near your kneecap ache when you walk up or down stairs? Does getting out of chair or standing from a squat bring on knee pain? If you have any of the symptoms, you may have "patellofemoral syndrome".

Patellofemoral syndrome is caused by an irritation behind or just below the kneecap. It can have a variety of causes. There's no need for alarm because several simple steps can often relieve you symptoms if the condition is detected early. But it's important to see a doctor of chiropractic or another health care practitioner who is accustomed to this type of problem in order to get a specific diagnosis for the source of your knee pain.

One common cause of patellofemoral syndrome is when the kneecap doesn't glide smoothly when you bend the knee. Improper knee motion is a major cause of this syndrome, and most noticeable when you walk/run up hills or straighten your knee with weights. These activities require strong quadriceps muscles (the muscles at the front of your thigh) that are balanced in their strength. This allows your knee to track in the groove at the bottom of the thighbone, or femur. Weak or unsymmetrically strengthened quadricep muscles, therefore, can lead to poor kneecap tracking. Other factors that may cause poor kneecap tracking and eventual anterior knee pain are tightness in the muscles of the back of your thighs (the hamstrings), flat feet or fallen arches (also called foot pronation), and poor alignment of the kneecap.

I have listed a few of the early signs and symptoms that you may experience if something is wrong.

- pain under the knee cap when going up or down stairs.
- pain in the kneecap region during or after running or jumping. (patellofemoral syndrome does not cause swelling unless you have had pain for a prolonged period).
- a small area of tenderness below, under, or at the immediate sides of the kneecap.
- stiffness and discomfort in the knee after keeping it in one position for a long time, such as riding a car or sitting in a theater.

Treatment for patellofemoral syndrome in my office may include complete rest, custom made orthotics, electrical stimulation of the area, or a complete rehabilitation

program. While recovering, remember to listen to your body. You must stop exercising when you feel pain or you may prolong the recovery time. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact me at my office (378-5456) or by email ([drgage@telus.net](mailto:drgage@telus.net)).