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Anterior Knee Pain (AKP)

Information for patients, service users and carers

AKP in Adults

This refers to pain originating from the front of the knee. It can become painful due to many factors.

There are multiple pain-sensitive tissues that surround this part of the knee, which contribute to AKP.

Investigation with x-ray or MRI is not required in the majority of cases because AKP is rarely associated with damage to the tissues of the knee.

What are the Symptoms?

- Pain in the front of the knee
- Pain with climbing or descending stairs
- Stiffness after sitting for long periods
- It is not uncommon to get clicking (crepitus) in the knee and rarely is a cause for concern.

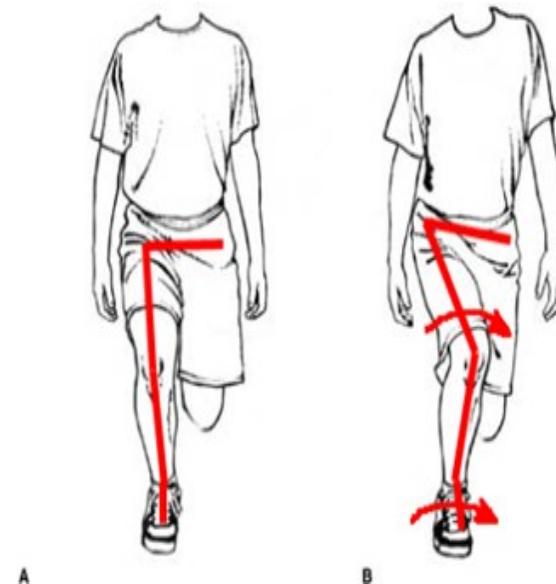


Who gets it?

AKP can affect men and women of all ages and is not necessarily linked to trauma or wear and tear changes.

What can cause AKP?

- Changes in load to the knee (inactivity or over activity)
- Muscle weakness of the hip (gluteal) and thigh (quadriceps)
- Poor biomechanics (altered patterns of movement) caused by unsupportive footwear and/or muscle weakness – see diagram



- Obesity
- Muscle tightness
- It is common for patients with AKP to avoid certain activities and sometimes worry that they are damaging their knee.

What to expect long term

- Episodes of AKP generally resolve in time but symptoms can last for several months
- Most cases improve with exercises and activity modification
- Surgery is not routinely performed to treat this condition, even in cases of persistent pain



What can I do to help?

- Remain active, but limit aggravating activities such as repeated kneeling, or sitting for long durations with your knees bent
- Use pain-relieving medication (discuss with your GP or Pharmacist if you are unsure what you can take)
- Use supportive footwear like a running trainer and limit use of hard footwear and high heeled shoes
- Perform some of the exercises on this leaflet within your comfort – it is normal to experience an ache during and after exercise
- Weight loss through a calorie-controlled diet if you are overweight

How can a Physiotherapist help?

A physiotherapist will provide a tailored treatment programme based on a clinical assessment to address the factors that may be contributing to your pain.

See below for examples:



Shallow wall squat



Mini lunge



Step ups



Thigh stretch