

# Patellar Bursitis

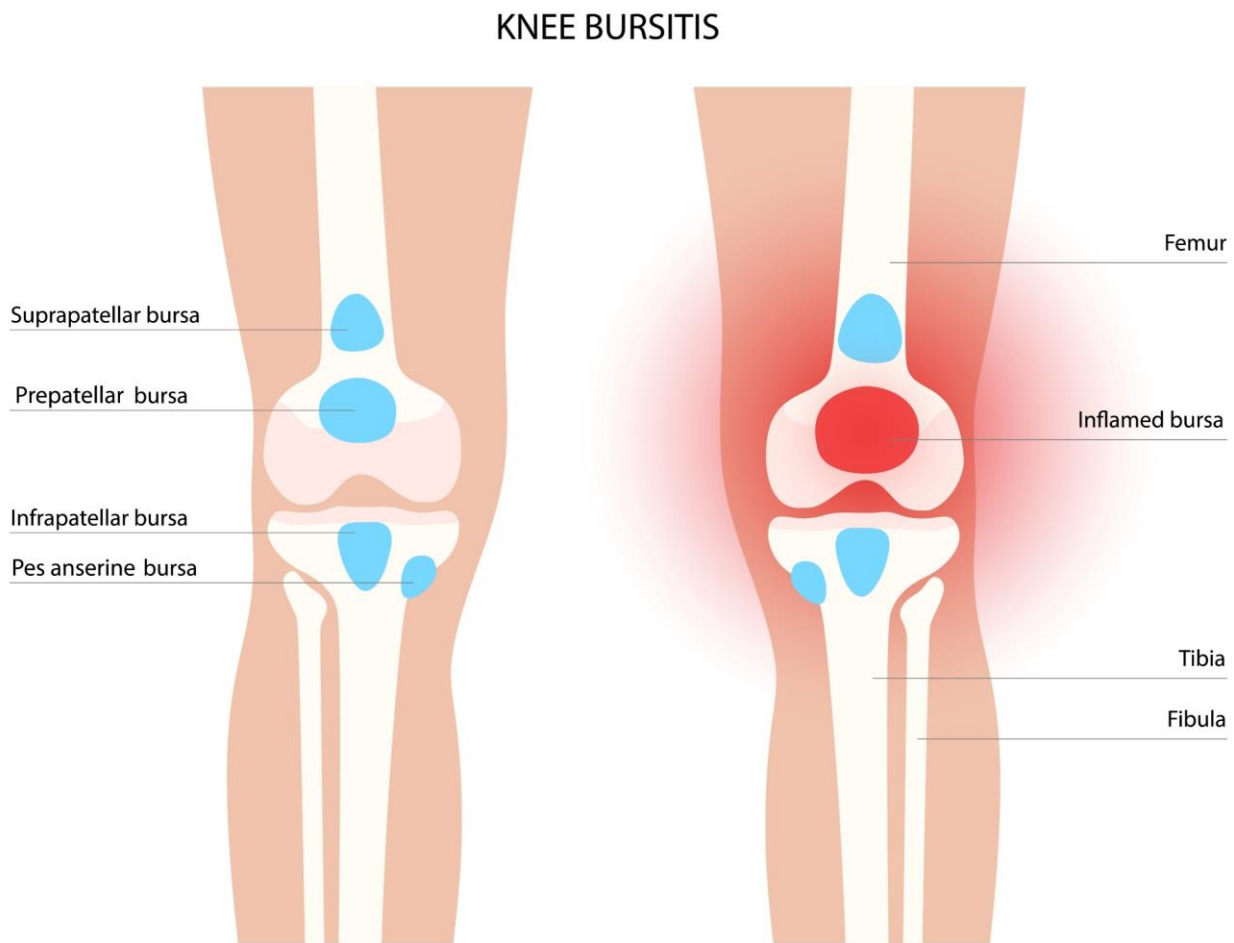
## What is patellar bursitis?

Prepatellar bursitis is an irritation or inflammation (swelling) of a bursa in your knee. A bursa is a fluid-filled sac that acts as a cushion between tendons, bones, and skin. There are many bursae in the knee. The prepatellar bursa is in front of the kneecap where the kneecap (patellar) tendon is attached.

Prepatellar bursitis is also called housemaid's knee from when maids got hurt from cleaning floors on their knees. The injury is common in wrestlers, who get it from when their knees rub on the mats. Volleyball players get it from when they dive onto their knees for the ball.

## How does it occur?

Bursitis can result from overuse, direct hit to the area, or chronic (constant) friction (such as from kneeling often).



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## What are the symptoms?

Prepatellar Bursitis causes pain and swelling over the front of the knee. You may have pain when you bend or straighten your leg.

## How is it diagnosed?

Your healthcare provider will do a physical exam of your knee to see if your patellar bursa is tender, and to evaluate (check) your movement patterns.

## How is it treated?

Treatment includes the following:

- **Ice:** Place an ice pack on your knee for 20 minutes as many times as you need to in a day
- **Elevation:** Keep your knee up by placing a pillow under your leg when your knee hurts
- **Compression:** Wrap an elastic bandage around your knee to reduce or prevent any swelling. You may want to take pain medicine. If pain continues after icing, take ibuprofen or acetaminophen. We recommend no sports training while you are taking pain medicine.
- **Relative Rest:** Avoid any activities that can hurt your knee, especially running, jumping, and other high impact activities. Crosstrain as you can.
- **Home Exercise program:** Do the exercises that your healthcare provider recommends (below) or physical therapist.
- **Braces:** Braces may give you comfort and do not cause any harm but have not been shown to treat the issues causing the pain.

## When can I return to my sport or activity?

The goal of rehabilitation is to get you back to your sport or activity as soon as **safely** possible. If you return too soon, your injury may get worse, which could lead to lasting damage. Everyone recovers from injury at a different rate. Return to your sport or activity will depend on how soon your symptoms and biomechanics improve. It is not by how many days or weeks it has been since you got your injury. In general, the longer you have symptoms before you start treatment, the longer it may take to get better.

Your medical provider will let you know when you are ready to return to play during your follow-up assessment.

# Home Exercise Program

Here are some exercises for you to do at home to help patellar bursitis and get you back to your normal activities. Some activities have options, so you can choose which one works better for you.

## 1. Hamstring Stretching

- **Hamstring Stretch Against the Wall:** Lie on the floor with one leg on the wall while extending the other leg through the door.



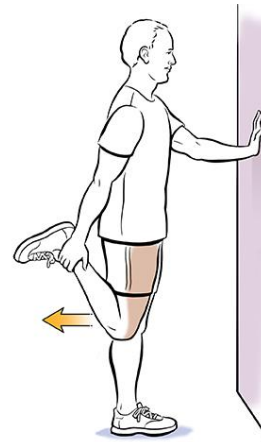
- **Standing Hamstring Stretch:** Place the heel of your foot on a higher surface. Keep your knee straight and lean forward. Bend at the hips until you feel a mild stretch in the back of your thigh. Do not roll your shoulders and bend at the waist when doing this because you will stretch your lower back instead.



Hold for 30 seconds.  
Do this twice on both sides.

## 2. Quadriceps Stretch

Stand an arm's length away from the wall, facing straight ahead. Keep one hand against the wall for balance. With your other hand, grasp (hold) the ankle of the opposite leg and pull your heel toward your buttocks. Don't arch or twist your back.



Hold for 30 seconds. Do this twice on both sides.

## 3. Iliotibial Band Stretch

Standing, cross one foot over the other, then lean in the opposite direction of the forward leg. Reach your arm of the back leg over your head.



Hold for 30 seconds. Do this twice on both sides.

#### 4. Gastrocnemius/Soleus Stretch

Facing a wall, put your hands at about eye level. Keep back leg straight and heel on floor, lean into wall until a stretch is felt in your calf. Hold for 30 seconds. Next, keep your back leg a little bent and heel flat on the floor. Lean into the wall until you feel a stretch in your other calf.



Do three (3) sets of 30 second holds with the knee slightly bent and then with the knee straightened (total of six (6) holds on each side).

#### 5. Split Lunges

You should start this exercise as soon as your pain allows. Stand with one foot in front of the other, with the injured knee forward. Bend the front knee enough to feel that the vastus medialis is working. Keep the knee pointing forward, don't let it fall inwards. Go back to the starting position and repeat.



Do three (3) sets 10 times (a total of 30) on both sides.

#### 6. Straight Leg Raise

Sit or lie on your back with one leg straight and the opposite knee bent with your foot planted to the ground. Contract your quadriceps and lift your leg up with a straight knee 10 to 12 inches off the ground. Contract your thigh muscles the whole time. Slowly lower your leg to the starting position and relax.



Do three (3) sets 10 times (a total of 30) on both sides.

#### 7. Prone Hip Extension

Lie on the floor on your stomach. Place your forehead on your forearms. Contract your glute then raise your leg and keep your knee straight about six (6) to eight (8) inches off the ground. Hold for five (5) seconds then gently lower down.



Do three (3) sets 10 times (a total of 30) on both sides.

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### 8. Side-Lying Leg Lift (Abduction)

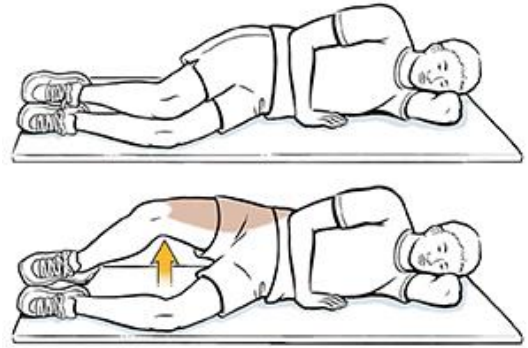
While lying on your side, slowly raise up your top leg to the side 10 to 12 inches. Next, slowly lower your leg for three (3) counts and repeat. Keep your knee straight and your toes pointed forward the whole time. Do not let your pelvis roll backwards or let your hip flex/move forward. You can bend your bottom leg to keep your body stable.



Do three (3) sets of 10 lifts (total of 30) on both sides.

### 10. Side-Lying Clams

Lie on your side with your knees bent and feet together. Keeping your ankles together, raise the top knee towards the ceiling, pivoting at the hip. Hold for three (3) seconds with your feet together, then lower down. There should be no movement in your lower back.



Do three (3) sets 15 times (a total of 45) on both sides.

### 9. Double Leg Bridges

Lie on your back with your knees bent and heels close to your bottom. Slowly push up through your heels and raise your hips towards the sky. Push up until your body is in one straight line from your shoulder to your knee. Squeeze your glutes at the top and hold for three (3) seconds. Slowly lower your hips back to the floor and repeat.



Do three (3) sets of 10 bridges (a total of 30) on both sides.

### 11. Side-Lying Leg Lift (Adduction)

Lying on your side, stack your hips over each other. Place your foot of the top leg on the floor just in front of your bottom leg knee. Pull your toes of your bottom leg towards your head. Contract your quadriceps. While keeping your knee straight, raise your bottom leg four (4) to six (6) inches, hold for three (3) seconds, then lower down slowly.



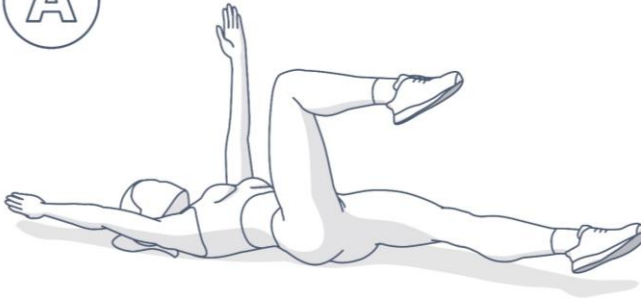
Do three (3) sets of 10 lifts (a total of 30) on both sides.



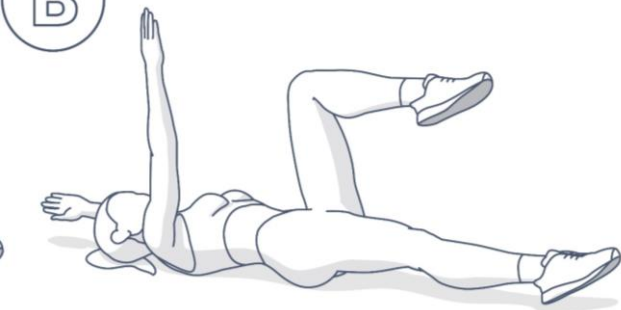
## 12. Dead Bug

While lying on your back with your knees bent, slowly lower one foot and the opposite arm. Return to the starting position and then repeat on the opposite side (one repetition or rep). Keep your lower back flat on the floor the whole time.

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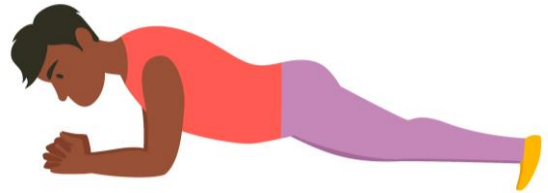
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Do three (3) sets 10 times (a total of 30) on both sides.

## 13. Forward Planks

Begin face down with your forearms resting on the mat, shoulder-width apart, elbows bent at 90 degrees. Contract your abdominal (stomach) muscles and push off the floor, rising on your toes. Try to keep a straight line from your shoulders, hips, knees, and ankles. Avoid hips from sinking low or rising too high. Hold for 20 to 60 seconds and keep good form.



Do three (3) sets of 20 to 60 seconds (a total of three (3) holds).

## 14. Side Planks

Lie on your side and rest your forearm on the mat. Bend your elbow at 90 degrees. Contract your abdominal muscles and push off the floor rising on your foot. Try to keep a straight line from your shoulders, hips, knees, and ankles. Avoid hips from sagging low or rising too high. Hold for 20 to 60 seconds while keeping good form.



Do three (3) sets of 20 to 60 seconds (a total of three (3) holds).

### 15. Wall Squat

Lean your back on a wall or closed door. Slide your body down until your thighs are parallel (going the same way) with the floor. Then, go back up. Your feet should be shoulder-width apart and about two (2) feet away from the wall. Knees should bend in line with the 2nd toe and not pass the front of the foot.



Do three (3) sets of 45-second holds (a total of 3).

### 16. Squats

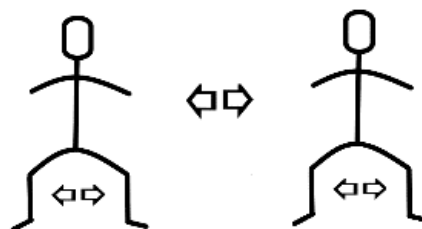
Begin standing with your feet just shoulder-width apart. Engage your core and sit back until your thighs are parallel with the floor. Then go back up. Point your feet forward up to 10 degrees outward. Knees should bend in line with the second toe. Do not pass the front of the foot.



Do three (3) sets 10 times (a total of 30).

### 17. Lateral Walks (Crab Walks)

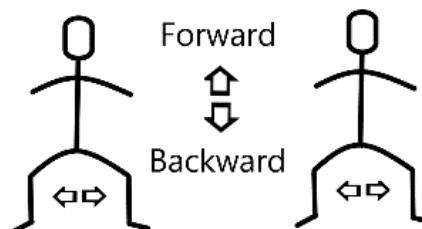
Start in an athletic position with your feet shoulder-width apart and knees bent a little. Push your hips back like you are sitting in a chair, keeping your knees apart so that your knee lines up with your second toe. Take 10 small steps in the lateral (right or left) direction of your choice. Once you do 10 steps in one direction, do 10 steps in the other direction. This will be one (1) set.



Do three (3) sets of 10 steps (a total of 30) in each direction laterally (side to side).

### 18. Monster Walks (Forward and Backwards)

Start in an athletic position (with your feet shoulder width apart and knees slightly bent). Push your hips back like you are sitting in a chair, keeping your knees apart so that your knee lines up with your second toe. Face forward and keep your athletic stance. Step forward with your right foot, swinging your other arm (left), in cadence (at the same time) with your step. Switch the arms and legs each step as you do ten steps forward. Then, walk ten steps backward in the same pattern.



Do three (3) sets of 10 steps (a total of 30) forward and backward.