

Knee pain is a common problem that can affect people of all ages and lifestyles. Up to 50% of people will experience knee pain in their lifetime. It can be caused by various factors, including injuries, overuse, or underlying medical conditions. This handout aims to provide you with essential information about knee pain and how to effectively manage it.

Types of Knee Pain:

- Osteoarthritis: The gradual wear and tear of the knee joint, leading to pain and stiffness.
- Tendonitis: Inflammation of the tendons that attach muscles to the knee joint.
- Ligament Injuries: Damage to the knee ligaments, such as the ACL or MCL.
- Meniscus Tears: Tears in the cartilage discs that cushion the knee joint.
- Bursitis: Inflammation of the bursae (fluid-filled sacs) around the knee.
- Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome : Pain around the kneecap due to improper tracking.

Common Causes of Knee Pain:

- Overuse: Repetitive activities or sports can strain the knee joint and surrounding tissues.
- Injury: Falls, direct blows, or accidents can lead to knee pain.
- Age: Ageing can increase the risk of knee osteoarthritis and related conditions.
- Improper Biomechanics: Poor alignment or gait can contribute to knee discomfort.

Symptoms:

- Pain in and around the knee joint
- Swelling, redness, or warmth
- Limited range of motion
- Weakness or instability
- Audible popping or clicking sounds

Prevention and Management:

- Rest: Avoid activities that worsen the pain and give your knee time to heal.
- Ice: Apply ice to the affected area to reduce swelling and inflammation.
- Compression: Use a compression bandage to support the knee.
- Elevation: Elevate your leg when resting to minimise swelling.
- Pain Medication: Over-the-counter pain relievers or prescription medications may be necessary.
- Weight Management: Excess weight can strain the knee joint, so maintain a healthy weight.
- Ergonomics: Maintain proper posture during activities and work to prevent strain.
- Orthotics: Customised shoe inserts can help correct foot and knee alignment.
- Proper Footwear: Choose shoes that provide good arch support and cushioning.
- Bracing: A brace or splint may provide additional support during healing.

When to Seek Professional Help:

If you experience any of the following, it is recommended to consult a healthcare professional:

- Severe or persistent pain
- Inability to bear weight on the affected leg
- Signs of infection (redness, warmth, fever)
- Instability or giving-way of the knee

Treatment Options:

- Physiotherapy: Customised exercises and techniques to improve knee strength and mobility.
- Medications: Pain relievers, anti-inflammatories, or muscle relaxants as prescribed.
- Injections: Corticosteroid injections can reduce inflammation and pain.
- Surgery: For severe cases, such as ligament tears or advanced osteoarthritis.