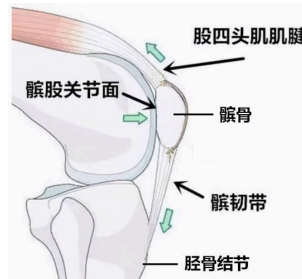


# Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome: Causes, Symptoms, and Care

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In daily clinical practice, it is common to encounter young and middle-aged patients seeking treatment for anterior knee pain. The main symptoms include occasional knee pain, which is mild when walking on flat surfaces but becomes significant during activities like climbing stairs, or squatting. Some patients also report occasional knee instability. X-ray examinations often reveal no obvious abnormalities. While the pain is not severe, it significantly affects daily life, exercise, and mood. This condition may be **patellofemoral pain syndrome (PFPS)**, also known as chondromalacia patellae.

## What is Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome?

The patella (kneecap) is a thick, triangular bone located at the front of the knee joint. It forms the patellofemoral joint with the femur (thigh bone) and protects the knee joint. PFPS refers to damage to the cartilage on the contact surface between the patella and the femur, resulting in anterior knee pain. The pain is particularly noticeable when the knee is partially flexed and the patellofemoral joint experiences friction and stress.

## What Causes Pain in PFPS?

The degeneration and damage of patellar cartilage are key causes of the pain.

- **Walking on Flat Ground:** Minimal knee flexion results in low stress and contact at the patellofemoral joint, typically not causing pain.

- **Climbing Stairs or Squatting:** Greater knee flexion increases contact and friction between the patella and femur, leading to pain.

#### What Causes PFPS?

**Direct and indirect Trauma or Chronic Stress** contributes to cartilage degeneration and injuries which often mark the early stages of knee osteoarthritis.

#### Care and Precautions for PFPS

1. **Keep the Knee Warm:** Protect the joint from cold temperatures.
2. **Avoid High-Stress Activities:** Minimize stair climbing, mountain hiking, or other exercises that put excessive strain on the knee. Opt for knee-friendly activities like swimming.
3. **Use a Knee Brace:** Wearing a knee brace during physical activities can help protect the joint and reduce strain.

By managing activity levels and taking preventive measures, patients can minimize symptoms and protect their knee health.