

Knee Pain

Why it happens, and how we help

Knee pain is common, and often very treatable. It can show up at the front, the sides, or behind the knee, and it isn't always coming from where it hurts. **Most knee pain is not a surgical issue, and often responds very well to the right rehabilitation.**

A quick look at the knee

The knee is a strong hinge joint where the thigh and shin bones meet, cushioned by cartilage and supported by ligaments and the muscles of your thigh. Because it sits between your hip and your foot, it relies on those areas working well too. When the knee is irritated or overloaded, or not well supported from above and below, it can become painful.

The knee isn't always the source

Pain felt at the knee **doesn't always come from the knee joint**, it can be referred from the hip or low back, or driven by how the hip and foot are moving. That's why we examine you rather than letting an image decide. Findings like cartilage or meniscus changes are common in people with **no pain at all**, so a scary-sounding label doesn't necessarily mean surgery.



The knee: a hinge joint where the thigh and shin bones meet.

How we sort it out

- 1 **We examine it.** A hands-on assessment of how your knee moves and loads, and a look at the hip and foot above and below it, tells us far more than a label does, and helps flag the small number of problems that truly need a surgeon.
- 2 **We image only if it will change the plan.** Scans aren't routine. We use them when your exam suggests they're needed, not just to put a name to the pain.
- 3 **If it's not surgical, we rehab it.** Most knee pain responds to **strengthening the muscles that support the knee**, restoring movement, and addressing how the hip and foot are moving, which often quietly add to the load.

A GREAT PLACE TO START

For most knee pain, guided rehabilitation is the recommended first step, and it works well.

Some knees do need a surgeon, and when yours is one of them, we'll tell you and refer you promptly. But for the majority, conservative care is a smart, effective place to begin, and we can help you find out what you're dealing with.



When knee pain needs prompt attention

See a provider promptly for knee pain that follows a **significant injury or fall**, an **inability to bear weight**, a knee that **locks, catches, or gives way**, **rapid swelling**, **marked weakness or numbness**, or signs of infection like **fever, redness, or warmth**.

The takeaway: most knee pain is manageable without surgery. We can figure out whether yours is a surgical issue, or coming from somewhere else, and if it isn't, help you rebuild a strong, comfortable knee.

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