

Hope & Healing

Knee Pain Advise For Healthy Knees

A heart at peace gives life to the body — Proverbs 14:30

Introduction _____

Of the 187 joints in your body, probably none causes more suffering than the knee. An estimated 50 million Americans have been or are now sidelined by knee pain or injury. What's the problem, you might ask.

"The knee," says Dr. James Fox, author of *Save Your Knees*, "is ill-suited for the jobs we ask it to do. It wasn't designed for football, soccer, automobile accidents, being a carpenter or plumber, or squatting or kneeling all day long. It was well designed originally, but there was no way to anticipate all the things we wind up asking it to do.

"For many of the demands we place on our knees, we need a joint that's rugged, like the hip, which is a ball-and-socket design with inherent stability. Instead we get two giant bones propped on top of one another, held together with the anatomical equivalent of rubber bands."

Overload _____

In normal walking a person weighing 150 pounds will have 900 pounds of force pass through each knee with each step. This equals 270 pounds per square inch where the bones meet. You can imagine how much greater the force is when you jog or jump. And if you're carrying 10 pounds extra weight, the knee gets 60 pounds extra stress.

Twist and Scream _____

The knee is the most frequently injured joint in many sports. Injuries often occur when the knee is hit from the

side or the force causes a "blow-out" of the joint. These type injuries usually occur in the "terrible triad":

- The medical collateral ligament
- The anterior cruciate ligament.
- The medial meniscus.

The ligaments hold the knee together. The meniscus is a half-moon shaped cartilage that keeps the ends of the femur (thigh bone) and the tibia (shin bone) from grating on each other. Forceful twisting can damage one or all.

Osteoarthritis of the Knee _____

Osteoarthritis of the knees is so common that nearly everyone over forty shows some signs of it on x-ray.

- Primary, resulting from normal wear and tear.
- Secondary, occurring after sports or other injuries, from diabetes, or as a result of chronic trauma from being overweight, or from certain types of work or from poor posture.

Keeping Knees Healthy _____

Preventing knee injuries involves luck and the use of common sense:

- **Wear a seat belt.** In dashboard knee, the knee is thrown against the dashboard during a wreck, damaging the inner surface of the kneecap, or, in some cases, fracturing the kneecap, causing long-term problems.

- **Strengthen the leg muscles.** You only have two knees and the replacement parts aren't nearly as good as the originals.

The only things holding the knees together are the ligaments and the muscles. Building up the muscles is critical, because the muscles give the real support. And, if knees have power and endurance, they are able to withstand the strain of walking and climbing stairs, as well as the other common things you do every day. So, let's get going. The following aren't hard to do and can relieve a lot of pain.

For Weak Knees _____

Build your quadriceps (the front of your thighs). Sit on the floor, your back against the wall, your legs straight out in front of you. Place a rolled towel under the small of one knee, then tighten the muscles in your leg without moving the knee. Hold the contraction and work up to holding it for 30 seconds. Relax. Repeat the tightening and relaxing process up to 25 times for each leg.

- **Do leg lifts.** Sitting with your back to the wall, place the small pillow in the hollow of your back. Now, do the exercise described above but instead of holding for 30 seconds, count to 5, then raise your leg a few inches and hold it for a count of 5, then lower it and relax for a count of 5. Repeat 3 sets of 20 lifts each.

Help the hamstrings (the back of your thighs). Lie on your stomach with your chin on the floor. Drape an ankle weight or a sock filled with coins across your ankle. Slowly lift the lower leg 6 to 12 inches off the floor, then slowly lower it back. Do 3 sets of as many leg lifts as you can comfortably do.

Other Tips to Help Aching Knees

- **Take a load off.** Lose a few pounds
- **Soothe with a rub.** Wintergreen lotions increase surface heat giving comfort. However, they don't cure.
- **Choices of painkillers.** Ibuprofen (Advil, Medipren, Nuprin, etc.) Gives pain relief with less stomach upset than Aspirin. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) gives some relief if used 3 to 4 times daily.
- **Modifying activity.** If you regularly jog but knee pain is getting in your way, you may need to go to swimming, biking, or rowing. Whatever you do, don't give in and become a couch potato.
- **Seek softer surfaces.** The dedicated runner may develop tendonitis from poor training habits, not warming up with a walk, and stretching. Dr. Fox cautions that shoes may also be to blame and advises runners to run on grass before asphalt and asphalt before concrete.
- **Get enough RICE.** If your exercise routine causes knee pain regularly, try RICE — rest, ice, compression, and elevation. Ice has tremendous anti-inflammatory properties. When you return from working out, prop your leg up, wrap the knee with an ACE bandage and plot an ice pack on for 20 minutes. Remove it for a few minutes, then reapply the ice.
- **Use heat with caution.** A heating pad used before an activity may let you exercise with less pain. But, if there's any swelling, or if you believe there's swelling, or if you have just

finished exercising and have pain, don't use heat, use ice.

- **Update your shoes.** Remember, when you run a mile, your foot strikes the ground 600 to 800 times. If your shoes don't absorb the shock, the shock spreads to the feet, ankles, shins, knees, hips and back. Dr. Gary Gordon of the University of Pennsylvania Sports Medicine Center tells runners who run 25 miles a week that they need new shoes every two to three months. Runners who run less, aerobic dancers, and basketball and tennis players who work out twice a week can get by on new shoes every four to six months.
- **Slip into low gear.** Cycling is an excellent way to strengthen the quadriceps and to stay in shape generally. But, knees can get too much strain from cycling if the pedaling is too hard. Marjorie Albohm, a Certified Athletic Trainer at the Indiana University School of Medicine, advises, "In general a lower gear is a better gear."
- **First and last, stretch.** Lisa Dobloug, a private fitness consultant, advises that you take 10 minutes to walk around and do light stretching. Then, after the workout, really stretch to counteract the pounding your knees took.

Summary _____

Even if you don't play a sport, but are just active — hiking, climbing, dancing, bike riding — you will want the best support your knees can give. Guard them against injury and reward them with good care.

Awaken the Miracle Within You

The Miracle of the Inspired Idea

The mind has the wonderful capacity to consider idea after idea when we need to improve some part of life. But, all ideas aren't of equal potential. Some are inspired ideas, given through our imagination. And the giver of the inspired idea is also the giver of the power to carry it out.

This means that when we pray for the vital idea to solve a situation, we are obeying God by that act — "Ask and it shall be given." It doesn't mean that we can order God to grant it.

The Divine Mind is not available to take our orders. It is we who obey orders. God's orders to us take the forms of inspirations, aspirations, and motivations.

The Bible says, "The Lord is my shepherd." It doesn't say "The Lord is my Messenger Boy."

The Lord inspires and motivates through ideas. We are free to accept or reject them, to choose the path of construction or destruction.

The path upward is always in obedience to God and to His laws of the universe.

The recommendations and information in this handout are appropriate in most cases. However, for specific information concerning your personal medical condition, please, consult your doctor.