

# Physical Therapy

## Definition



The art and science of eradicating or easing pain and improving bodily function by direct physical means, both hands-on and conservative modalities without the use of drugs.



2351 Energy Drive 1001  
Baton Rouge LA 70808  
phone: (225) 927-3000

10343 Siegen Lane 3-A  
Baton Rouge, LA 70810  
phone: (225) 767-4440

30789 La. Hwy. 16 D-2  
Denham Springs, LA 70726  
phone: (225) 664-9150

# KNEE PAIN



## Types of Knee Injuries You Might Be Referred to a PT for:

1. Patella Tendinitis is an inflammation of the large tendon which runs down the front of the knee. People often complain of pain in the front of the knee. Some people call it “jumper’s knee” because athletes who jump a lot can develop this painful condition.
2. Bursitis is an inflammation of the “bursa” or a fluid-filled sack protecting the joint and which acts to reduce the friction between the bones of the knee and the tendons rubbing over them. Bursitis can develop from extended periods of kneeling such as gardening or laying down carpets.
3. Chondromalacia is a softening and irritation of the cartilage under the knee cap. It causes pain under the knee cap especially when walking up and down stairs and squatting.
4. Meniscus Tear is a tear or rip in one of the two crescent-shaped cartilages of the knee joint. One is on the outside or lateral half of the joint and the other is on the inner or medial half of the joint. Tears in a meniscus are seen in both young people and old people. Young people and athletes can tear a meniscus when the knee is bent and twisted during a traumatic injury. In older people the meniscus can tear from normal degeneration and aging.
5. Ligament Injuries are sprains or overstretching of the ligaments that help to support the knee joint. A person with ligament injuries will often feel as

if the knee will “give out” and frequently complain of pain and swelling on the sides or back of the knee. When a football or soccer player is hit on the outside of the knee, one or more of these ligaments is often torn.

6. Arthritis is an inflammation or a wearing out of the cartilage of the knee joint. When the cartilage is worn

down the bones rub on each other causing pain and stiffness. When severe physical deformities can occur. People with severe arthritic changes often have difficulty navigating steps, walking long distances, squatting down or even sitting comfortably.

### Why Try PT First?

Physical Therapists are highly trained to identify the faulty moving components, weak or tight muscles and can restore normal motion. This halts further injury to the knee and helps to speed up the healing process. In the case of a torn cartilage or a sprained knee, strengthening the muscles is vital and necessary to compensate for stability that might have been lost with the injury.

The goals of Physical Therapy are to restore the normal motion, flexibility and strength in the muscles and joints to get them to move as freely as possible. As a result, you not only function better but have reduced pain and discomfort.

### What Should You Do Before Your PT Appointment?

- A. Follow any advice your Doctor gives you.
- B. Rest, with your leg elevated, as much as possible to give your knee a chance to heal.
- C. Apply ice to reduce the pain and any swelling that may occur.
- D. Apply compression to reduce the swelling by wrapping in an ace bandage.

### What Should You Expect at Your First PT Visit?

Paperwork: On your first visit to our clinic there will be some paperwork to complete so that we can bill your insurance carrier appropriately and efficiently. With this done in the very beginning you can concentrate on getting better.

Evaluation: Also on your first visit, your Physical Therapist will be doing a full evaluation of your situation. What the PT will be looking for is any loss of normal motion, flexibility or strength in your knee or surrounding areas

that could be affecting your knee. The PT will evaluate how this is affecting the function of your whole body during daily activities including work tasks. The initial evaluation can take up to an hour or in some cases longer.

Proper Attire: You should come dressed so that you can move about as comfortably as possible whether standing, sitting or lying down. Shorts would be appropriate so that the therapist can work on your knee easily.

### What Treatment Should You Expect?

1. Modalities (or the use of heat, cold, electricity, etc.) may be used to help decrease the pain you are experiencing, improve your circulation and/or help the muscles relax. This is usually done as a preparation for doing exercises or activities to improve strength and flexibility.
2. Hands-On Manual Therapy Techniques are very specialized techniques done by Physical Therapists using their hands in very precise ways to relax muscles in spasm, to lengthen tight muscles, to restore balance to the muscles in the area and to improve motion of the knee joint itself.
3. Exercises will be used to aid your recovery. The goal is to improve your body’s ability to hold onto the changes the therapy makes, to stabilize and support your knee and make you strong and flexible so that it will be protected from further injury. Exercise will help you get back to a level of daily activity that restores your quality of life at home and at work. Your Physical Therapist will be designing your exercise program to accomplish all the benefits you need.
4. Posture and/or Body Mechanics Education to help you use safer positioning of your body during daily activities. This can not only aid your recovery but can help you prevent further injury in the future.

