

Acute Patellar Injuries - A True Guide



Numerous types of orthopedic injuries are there, and they are classified based on their location and severity. Apart from this, the treatment is also decided according to the type of injury that occurred. Some orthopedic injuries require surgery involving the use of orthopedic devices while some cases can be treated without surgery.

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In this post, our topic of discussion will be acute patellar injuries, a type of orthopedic condition that affects our knees. Here, we will discuss its causes, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment procedures. But before we move ahead, let us have a look at what this condition is.

What Are Acute Patellar Injuries?

Our kneecap is known as the patella, and any injury occurring at this location is referred to as acute patellar injury. Such injuries generally occur suddenly, and that is why they are here known as “acute.”

Patella protects the knee joint while ensuring safe and smooth movement while walking, sitting, and getting engaged in different types of sports activities. Acute patellar injuries occur due to a direct impact on the front of the knee.

What Are the Causes of Such Injuries?

There are multiple causes of acute patellar injuries, and the severity of the condition will depend upon the cause. Both traumatic and non-traumatic causes can lead to such injuries. Let us have a look at them:

Accidents

When it comes to orthopedic injuries, accidents are among the commonest causes and the same is the case with acute patellar injuries. As the patella is in the front of the knee, it is more prone to getting injured. It can either dislocate or break due to falls, high-energy direct impact, or car crashes.

Sports Injuries

Athletes who are engaged in contact sports are also prone to acute patellar injuries. Sudden twisting of the knee, quick direction changes while walking, or a direct high-energy collision with a fellow player can injure the patella.

Osteoporosis

People suffering from osteoporosis can damage the patella even with low-impact and non-serious falls. This is because they already have weak and brittle bones, and sometimes, the injury might not have a significant cause.

Anatomical Differences

Some people have different bone anatomies, and this could also lead to knee instability or dislocation. Such people are also prone to injuries due to loose ligaments and improper anatomy. So, this could also be a reason for acute patellar injuries.

What Are the Symptoms?

Some of the common symptoms noticed in such conditions include:

- ✓ Pain
- ✓ Swelling
- ✓ Knee instability
- ✓ Crackling sound or snapping sensation while moving
- ✓ Locked joint
- ✓ Deformity
- ✓ Bruising

How Are Acute Patellar Injuries Diagnosed?

Diagnosis is made with the physical examination where the healthcare service provider will examine the range of motion, painful movements & areas, and visible signs like swelling or bruising. For confirmation, imaging tests like x-ray and/or MRI are also ordered. Blood tests are also performed to confirm whether there is inflammation is there especially when an infection is suspected.

How Are Acute Patellar Injuries Treated?

The diagnosis of the condition decides which type of treatment will be the best. If the injury is mild, rest, the application of ice to the affected area, and prescribed NSAIDs may be helpful in relieving the associated symptoms.

If the kneecap is displaced closed reduction will be performed (if possible) under anesthesia to bring it back in its true position. Plus, a cast, splint, or brace may

also be applied to immobilize the bone for proper healing and to avoid re-dislocation.

In serious cases, surgery will be required where the surgeon will use bone screws, orthopedic implants plates, wires, and/or pins to realign bone pieces and stabilize them in their original anatomical position. This surgical process is known as open reduction and internal fixation. It is often recommended when complete patellar tendon repair is there.

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