

Chondromalacia Patella

This is also known as Runner's Knee or Sportsman's Knee. It causes pain, soreness or stiffness on extension and flexion of the knee due to softening, roughening or irritation of the underside of the patella or knee cap.

This is due to an muscular imbalance in the quadriceps and a small muscle on the inside of the knee called the vastus medialis obliquus. The vastus medialis is the smallest muscle in the quadriceps group and its action in the last 10-15° of action, assisted by the vastus medialis obliquus, is to balance the lateral pull of the rest of the muscle group.

If the muscle is weak, as it will be in most activities, because it only acts when the leg is straight or almost straight, the patella is dragged off line causing it to rub the lateral edge of the groove between the femoral condyles.

This incorrect tracking sets up an inflammation that can be progressive. This condition affects women more than men due to the greater width of their pelvis which means that the angle of pull of the quadriceps at the patella is automatically greater.

Exercises specifically to develop and strengthen the smaller muscle on the inside of the knee are an effective remedy for this condition.