



NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™

Helping Hand™

Health Education for Patients and Families

Sports Medicine: Osgood Schlatter Disease

Osgood-Schlatter disease is an inflammation (swelling) of the growth plate of the leg just below the knee at the tibial tubercle (the bump below the kneecap). The tibial tubercle is where the large muscle group of the thigh (quadriceps) attaches to the shin bone (tibia). The growth plate is a weakness spot and injury to the growth plate occurs due to repeated stress.

Signs and symptoms

- a tender, sometimes swollen bump below the knee
- pain with activity such as running, jumping, or squatting or following direct contact to the area (kneeling)
- pain with straightening the leg
- in more severe cases, pain may occur just with walking or even at rest

Increased risk

- heavy physical activity
- obesity
- males ages 11 to 16
- rapid growth spurts
- poor physical conditioning (strength and flexibility)

Treatment

- Medicine
 - Anti-inflammatory medicines, such as ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®) or naproxen (Aleve®) may be recommended. Take these as directed by your health care provider.

- Other minor pain relievers, such as acetaminophen, may be used.
- Use of cold and heat
 - Cold is used to relieve pain and reduce swelling. Cold should be applied for 10 to 15 minutes every 2 to 3 hours and after any activity that makes symptoms worse. Use ice packs or an ice massage.
 - Heat may be used before stretching and strengthening activities prescribed by your health care provider or athletic trainer. Use a heat pack or a warm soak.
- Rest
 - A decrease in activity level can improve pain and swelling. Athletes should never take part if they are limping.
- Bracing
 - A patellar tendon strap placed just above the painful area may help relieve stress on the growth plate.
 - A knee sleeve with padding over the growth plate may be more helpful when direct contact is the main cause of symptoms.
- Rehab
 - Exercises done at home or under care of a physical therapist or athletic trainer are helpful for strengthening and stretching muscles (particularly the quadriceps and hamstrings).

How to prevent

- maintain healthy body weight
- perform warm up and stretching before and after practice or competition
- maintain conditioning, muscle strength, endurance, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness
- avoid excessive exercise
- use proper technique

When to call the health care provider

Call your health care provider or the **Sports Medicine team** at **614-355-6000** if:

- symptoms worsen or do not improve after 4 weeks of treatment

To schedule an appointment with Sports Medicine, visit [NationwideChildrens.org/SportsMedicine](https://www.NationwideChildrens.org/SportsMedicine) Scheduling or scan this code with your camera phone.

