

## Knee Bursitis

### What is knee bursitis?

A bursa is a small fluid-filled sac that provides cushioning and support for joints. Inflammation of a bursa is called bursitis.

The knee joint has four bursae: one above the kneecap, one over the kneecap, one below the kneecap and one to inner side of the knee below the joint. Any of these can become inflamed, but knee bursitis commonly involves the bursa over the kneecap and the one on the inside of the knee below the joint.

Knee bursitis is caused by:

- trauma (e.g. a direct blow to your knee)
- frequent and sustained pressure (e.g. prolonged kneeling on hard surfaces)
- overuse (e.g. running, football, netball)
- infection
- complications from other knee conditions (e.g. arthritis, gout)

### What are the symptoms of knee bursitis?

The symptoms vary depending on which bursa is affected and the cause of the bursitis. The main symptoms are pain and swelling.

### What does your doctor look for?

Your doctor will ask you about your medical history including your symptoms and your lifestyle. Your doctor will also examine your knees looking for: difference between them; signs of warmth; tenderness; swelling; your range of motion and whether it hurts to bend your knee.

### What investigations are needed?

Your doctor might request imaging to rule out other conditions that have similar symptoms to bursitis. Imaging tests include X-ray, MRI and ultrasound.

If an infection is suspect, your doctor may take a sample of the fluid in the bursa. This is done by inserting a needle into the bursa and draining (aspirating) some of the fluid. The fluid is then sent away for testing.

### How is knee bursitis treated?

The treatment options for knee bursitis include:

- non-drug therapy (e.g. physiotherapy or sports therapy, knee braces, knee sleeves)
- medications (e.g. anti-inflammatories, antibiotics in case of infection. joint injections, joint aspiration)
- surgery to remove the bursa