



Patella Dislocation/Subluxation

Home Exercise Program

Treatment

Initial treatment includes reduction of the patella back into place which may happen on its own or at an emergency room or urgent care. After that, depending on how bad the injury was, you may be asked to wear a knee immobilizer or special brace. Follow your provider's instructions for the brace, however most patients can take the brace off when not putting weight on their leg. It's also helpful to remember the following acronym:

L
LOAD
Gradually increase the amount of pressure on the injured area after resting it for 48-72 hours

U
USE COMPRESSION
Compressing the injury with elastic bandages helps control swelling and provides support

S
STAY MOVING
Gently moving the injured area through pain-free motion helps speed up recovery

K
KEEP IT ELEVATED
Elevating the injured area helps decrease pain and swelling

I
ICE FOR PAIN
Applying an ice pack to the injured area for 15-20 minutes intervals helps decrease pain

N
NEW INJURIES NEED REST
Resting the injured area for the first 24-72 hours prevents further injury

Patella Dislocation Stage I Exercises

- 1. Straight Leg Stretch** - Lay down in a bed or on the floor on your back and place a towel or pillow under your ankle or heel and sit for 3-5 minutes allowing for gravity to straighten your knee. You may also place a small weight over the knee.
- 2. Heel Slides** - Lay down in a bed or on the floor on your back, drag your heel towards your buttocks on the bed/floor so your knee bends. Stop when you feel pain, a small stretch is normal, hold for 5 seconds, repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets of 10.





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3. **Quadriceps Sets** - Sit on the floor with your injured leg straight in front of you. Press the back of your knee down while tightening the muscles on the top of your thigh. Hold this position for 5 seconds. Complete 3 sets of 10.



4. **Straight Leg Raise** - Sit on the floor with the injured leg straight and the other leg bent, foot flat on the floor. Pull the toes of your injured leg toward you as far as you can, while pressing the back of your knee down and tightening the muscles on the top of your thigh. Raise your leg six to eight inches off the floor and hold for 5 seconds. Slowly lower it back to the floor. Complete 3 sets of 10.



5. **Abduction** - Lie on your uninjured side and place leaning on the elbow of your uninjured side and using the arm of the injured side in front of you to stabilize your body. Slowly with the injured leg up, hold for 55 seconds then lower slowly. Be sure to keep your hips steady and don't roll forwards or backwards. Complete 3 sets of 10.



6. **Adduction** - Lie on your injured side with your top leg bent and flat foot placed in front of the injured leg, which is kept straight. Raise your injured leg as far as you can comfortably and hold it there for 5 seconds. Keep your hips still while you are lifting your leg. Hold this position for 5 seconds, and then slowly lower your leg. Complete 3 sets of 10.

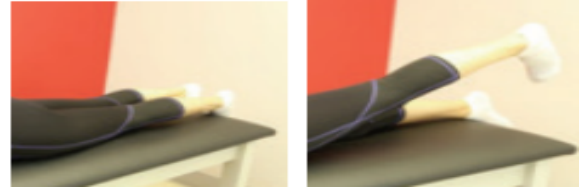


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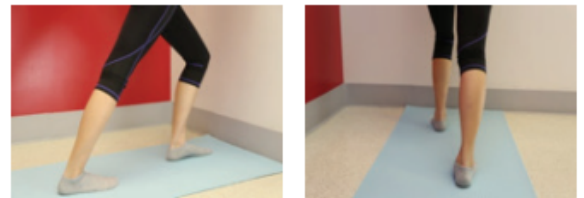
7. **Extension** - Lie on your stomach. Raise your injured leg as far as you can comfortably and hold it there for 5 seconds. Keep your hips still while you are lifting your leg. Hold this position for 5 seconds, and then slowly lower your leg. Complete 3 sets of 10



Patella Dislocation Stage II Exercises

DO NOT PROGRESS WITH THESE EXERCISES UNTIL CLEARED TO DO SO

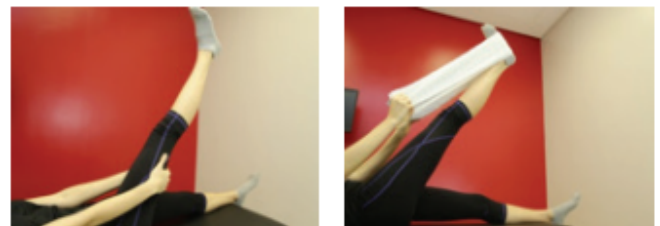
8. **Standing Calf Stretch** - Facing a wall, put your hands against the wall at about eye level. Keep the uninjured leg forward and your injured leg back about 12-18 inches behind your uninjured leg. Keep your injured leg straight and your heel on the floor and keep your toes pointed towards the wall. Next, do a slight lunge by bending the knee of the forward leg. Lean into the wall until you feel a stretch in your calf muscle. Hold this position for 30-60 seconds, and repeat 3 times.



9. **Half Kneeling Ankle Mobility** - Begin in a half-kneeling position with your forward foot a few inches away from the base of a wall. Shift your weight forward, pushing your knee toward the wall as far as you can. Hold, then relax and repeat. Make sure to maintain your balance and move only through a pain free range of motion.



10. **Hamstring Stretch** - Lie on your back and bring affected leg towards your chest. Grab the back of your thigh and try to extend your leg. Hold this position for 30 to 60 seconds, feeling a stretch in the back of your thigh. Repeat 3 times. You may also try this with a towel around your foot if it is more comfortable.





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11. **Quadriceps Stretch** - Stand sideways to a wall, about an arm's length away from the wall, with your injured leg towards the outside. Facing straight ahead, keep the hand nearest the wall against the wall for support. With your other hand, grasp the ankle of your injured leg and pull your heel up toward your buttocks. Do not arch or twist your back. Hold this position for 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times.



This may also be done while laying on the opposite side and grasping the ankle of the affected leg. Do not arch or twist your back. Hold this position for 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times.



12. **Clamshells** - Lie on your side with your knees slightly bent, keeping your legs and ankles together. Open and close your knees like a clam by lifting your top knee up until it is parallel with your hip. Keep your feet together throughout the exercise, move slowly and controlled as if someone is pushing against your knee while you are pressing it up. Complete 3 sets of 10.



Prevention

1. **Stay in shape**
2. **Stretch** - Before doing any strenuous activity, do a 5 minute warm up and do stretching exercises. Remembering to stretch your knee will help keep the structures around the knee flexible and less likely to be irritated by activity
3. **Increase training gradually** - Dramatic increases in activity over a short period of time can result in overuse injuries
4. **Use proper running gear** - Make sure that your shoes fit properly and provide good support
5. **Use proper running form**
6. **Strengthening of thigh, hip and trunk muscles** - Helps to "off-load" stress on the patellofemoral joint using the above mentioned exercises



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When can I return to my sport or activity?

The goal of rehabilitation is to return you to your sport or activity as soon as is safely possible. If you return too soon, you may worsen your injury, which could lead longer healing times. Everyone recovers at a different rate. Returning to your sport or activity will be determined by how soon your knee recovers, not by how many days or weeks it has been since pain began. Typically for patellar dislocations it will take about 3 months before returning to sporting activities. After successful completion of physical therapy and a home exercise program, it may be recommended to use a patella stabilizing or “J” brace which can be purchased at most sporting good stores, medical supply stores and online through retailers like amazon.com.