

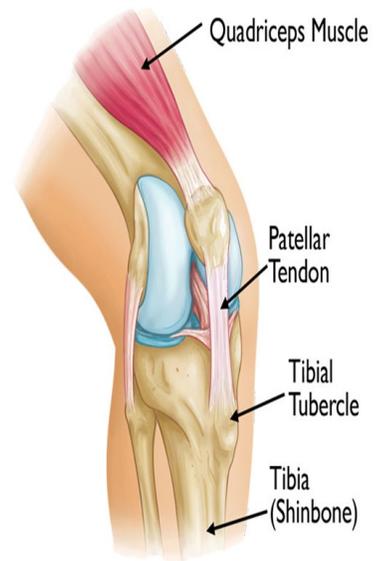
Osgood-Schlatter Disease



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Knee Anatomy

The knee is made up of four main bones, the femur (thigh bone), tibia (shin bone), fibula (outer shin bone), and patella (knee cap). There is a joint capsule, a thick ligamentous structure, that surrounds the entire knee. Inside the capsule is the synovial membrane, which provides nourishment and synovial fluid to lubricate the knee joint. There are also seven bursa (fat pads) in the knee that reduce friction and allow your joint to move smoothly. The stability of your knee comes from four ligaments, the medial collateral ligament (MCL), lateral collateral ligament (LCL), posterior cruciate ligament (PCL) and anterior cruciate ligament (ACL). The main muscles that help control your knee are the hamstrings (creating knee flexion) and the quadriceps (knee extension).



What is Osgood-Schlatter disease?

Osgood-Schlatter disease is a common cause of knee pain in growing adolescents. It is an inflammation of the area just below the knee where the patellar tendon (from the knee cap) attaches to the tibia (shinbone).

What causes Osgood-Schlatter disease?

Osgood-Schlatter disease occurs most often in youth who are growing, most commonly in boys between the ages of 13 and 14 and girls between the ages of 11 and 12. During this time, bones, muscles, tendons and other structures are growing rapidly. Physically active youth are especially prone, as running and jumping puts additional stress on bones and muscles. Bones in growing children have a special area where the bone grows, called the growth plate. The growth plate is usually at the end of the bone and made up of cartilage. When you are done growing, this turns into solid bone. Growth plates can serve as an attachment for tendons (strong tissue that connects muscle and bone). The tibial tubercle is the growth plate at the end of the tibia and this is where the patellar tendon (which connects to the quadriceps muscle) attaches. When you are active, the quadriceps muscle pulls on the tendon, which then pulls on the tibial tubercle. This can lead to an inflammation of the tibial tubercle growth plate, and it might even become visible.

What do I do if I think I have Osgood-Schlatter disease?

Some symptoms of Osgood-Schlatter disease are:

- Knee pain and tenderness at the tibial tubercle
- Swelling at the tibial tubercle
- Tight muscles in the front or back of the thigh

If you think you suffer from Osgood-Schlatter disease, you may take some pain reliever to alleviate the pain. You may want to see your physician and discuss physical therapy in order to stretch and strengthen the lower extremity muscles as well as learn proper biomechanics. Bracing is also an option. If the pain becomes intense, you may want to limit your activity. If you need to see a physician, call 206 598 3294, option 8 to set up an appointment with the UW Sports Medicine Center at Husky Stadium. Mention that you are a Seattle United athlete and they will get you in within 48 hours.