

## **Chondromalacia patellae summary treatment sheet**

**Pathology:** Also referred to as runner's knee, patella maltracking syndrome, or vastus medialis oblique syndrome. Chondromalacia is a common cause of kneecap pain or anterior knee pain. This condition often affects young, otherwise healthy athletes. Chondromalacia is due to an irritation of the undersurface of the kneecap. The posterior surface of the kneecap, or patella, is covered with a layer of smooth cartilage. This cartilage normally glides effortlessly across the knee during bending of the joint. However, in some individuals, the kneecap tends to rub against one side of the knee joint, and the cartilage surface become irritated, and knee pain is the result.

**History:** Patient may have a history of training for a running or cycling event and/or recently increased their mileage. Women are more commonly affected with chondromalacia due to a wider Q angle.

**Assessment:** compress the patella; if there is pain there is a good chance patient had chondromalacia.

**Bolstering/Patient comfort:** Ensure that all muscles are relaxed during treatment

**Heat/Cold Therapy:** Ice knee immediately after onset of pain (in acute state) to reduce inflammation in the early stages. Local ice works well; also apply ice to desensitize pain before deeper massage. Ice may be used before and after an event to numb pain.

**General Massage:** Massage all muscles above the knee, including ITB and all quad muscles but particularly vastus lateralis.

**Specific Massage:** compression, broadening, and stripping around the knee cap; circular thumb massage and cross fiber strokes may be applied.

**Evaluate / Treat TrPs:** Eliminate trigger points in all upper leg compartments increasing ROM and mobility of the knee with less pain.

**Patient Education:** Rest! Avoiding painful activities that irritate the knee for several weeks, followed by a gradual return to activity is very important.

**Stretching Exercises/ ROM:** Stretch the quadriceps and hamstrings to relieve pressure off the knee.

**Strengthening:** emphasize strengthening the quadriceps and hamstring muscle groups, particularly vastus medialis. Do terminal knee extensions to strengthen the vastus medialis muscle.

**Patient Education:** Foam rollers are particularly effective to break up any trigger points along the quadriceps and hamstrings; self massage around the patella is also very helpful.

**Ergonomic Factors:** Educate patient about proper footwear and about avoiding overuse. Cho pat knee band /strap might also be helpful, particularly when in heavy training mode or at events.

**Medical Referral:** It is appropriate to co-treat the patient with another medical professional and or after receiving medical approval. Other more serious conditions may be overlooked.