

Are You Ready for Some Football?

...or any other fall sport?

It's time to start gearing up and training! Why risk a sports injury when it could be avoided with an injury prevention program or sport-specific exercises?

PSPN's goal is to educate athletes on ways to prevent injuries and become better at your sport through the expertise provided by our participating physical and occupational therapists.

So get ready! It's time to be proactive and become the best and healthiest athlete you can be!

Have You Heard of Patellafemoral Pain Syndrome?

- Written by Stephanie Barnes, DPT, from Back to Work Physical Therapy in Tampa, Florida.

You may not have heard of it, but perhaps you have suffered from it. Patellafemoral pain syndrome is a term used to describe the pain behind or around the kneecap (patella) resulting from problems with the patellafemoral joint. This is one of the most common causes of knee pain in runners or athletes.

Symptoms:

- Pain is usually under or around the kneecap, which can be on one or both legs.
- Prolonged sitting, squatting, kneeling, running, jumping, climbing, or walking down stairs aggravates pain.

Causes:

- Many factors may contribute to the development of patellafemoral pain syndrome. The large group of thigh muscles (quadriceps muscles) attach to the kneecap (patella), thus controlling the movement of the kneecap. The kneecap glides through the groove in the thighbone (femur), increasing the force of the quadriceps muscles with bending and straightening of the knee.
- Overuse, overload, repeated bending of the knee, along with other weight bearing activities may increase pressure between the kneecap and the thighbone, irritating the undersurface of the kneecap (articular cartilage), leading to its degeneration, which can cause great pain. This cartilage degeneration is also known as "chondromalacia patellae."
- Muscle imbalances resulting from tightness or weakness of the thigh muscles can also cause abnormal gliding of the kneecap, leading to inflammation and pain.
- Abnormal gliding of the kneecap towards the outside of the groove leads to damage to the cartilage underneath the kneecap.
- Alignment problems are caused if the bones in the lower leg are abnormal, which also causes abnormal gliding of the kneecap within the groove when the knee moves. These include the increased angle between the thighbone (femur) and shinbone (tibia), flat feet, and knock-knees.

Treatment:

- Control the pain by resting, taking anti-inflammatory drugs, and using ice packs.
- Modify the activity level to avoid the motions that irritate or overload the kneecap.
- Try non-impact aerobic exercises, such as swimming, will not make the pain worse.
- Stretch tight muscles (quadriceps, iliotibial band, and hamstrings).
- Strengthen all the musculature of the affected lower extremity, including the hips may help take pressure of the kneecap.
- Evaluating footwear, changing shoes, or wearing arch supports may improve lower extremity biomechanics by preventing excessive pronation (flattening) of foot.

Prognosis:

- Most people suffering from patellofemoral pain recover fully and are able to resume their previous activities.
- Surgery is prescribed when patellofemoral pain cannot be eased with braces, rest, or physical therapy. Surgery for chondromalacia or lateral tracking of the kneecap could include an arthroscopy or realignment procedure. An arthroscopy removes fragments of damage kneecap cartilage through a small incision. A realignment procedure reduces abnormal pressure on the cartilage and supporting structures around the front of the knee.

Prevention:

- Stay in shape because good general conditioning is important to controlling and preventing patellofemoral pain. Losing weight to avoid overstressing the knees can also help.
- Stretching before and after running or other exercise will keep the supporting structures around the front of the knee flexible and less likely to be irritated.
- Increase training gradually to avoid sudden changes in intensity which can irritate knees.
- Use proper running gear with good shock absorption and quality construction with a good fit. If you have flat feet, you may need shoe inserts.

It's Time to Use Your Noodle!

- Written by Emily Dunlap, Physical Therapist from Lakeway Aquatic Therapy and Wellness Center in Lakeway, Texas.

The start of school may be just around the corner, but summer is still in full swing. Everyone is gathered around the pool to cool off in the summer heat. Why not use this time to get in shape for fall sports?

Grab that old noodle you have in your garage and put it to good use. You'll be amazed at what you can do with this low cost pool toy.

Here are some great ideas to make good use of your time in the pool.

Warm up 5-10 minutes

Noodle Cruise - Sit on noodle and propel forward (breast stroke arms, bicycle legs) and backward (reverse breast stroke arms, reverse bicycle or flutterkick legs) and sideways (sidestroke arms, egg beater style legs). This will warm up your entire body.



Noodle Cruise

Strengthening - 10 minutes total

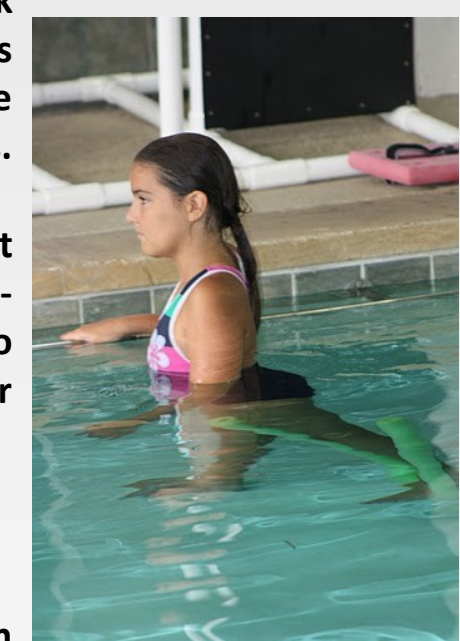


Twisted Noodle Pull Downs

Twisted Noodle Pull-Downs for Core and Triceps- Back against wall of pool and squat down so water line is above breast line. Fold noodle into pretzel form. Press noodle down to touch top of thighs (careful not to lift hips away from the wall). You should feel your abdominals tightening and your triceps working. Try again with noodle pressed down to side. This will engage your oblique muscles of your waist even more. Repeat 10-20 times for 2-3 sets.

Noodle Windshield Wipers for Core and Rotator Cuff - Back against wall and use pretzel noodle (similar to above). Press noodle under water so elbows at 90 degrees. Rotate arms back and forth similar to motion of windshield wipers. Repeat 10-20 times for 2-3 sets.

Noodle Leg Press for Legs - Stand with noodle under foot (hold onto edge of pool if needed for balance). Swing leg forward and back (just enough so noodle won't float away) to work front and back of hips. Swing leg out to side and back in to work inner and outer thigh. Circle leg to work entire hip. Repeat 10-20 times for 2-3 sets.



Noodle Press for Legs

Cardio 20-30 minutes total

Noodle Lift - Tread water in deep end with noodle raised over head. This is harder than it looks!

Noodle Torpedo - Flutterkick as fast as possible using noodle as kickboard - this will give great cardio and leg strengthening especially the hamstrings and gluts.

Noodle Skodoodle - Frog or Whip Kick as fast as possible using noodle as kickboard - this will give great cardiovascular workout and strength training especially for the inner thigh.

Stretching - 5-10 minutes



Hip Flexor Stretch

Hamstring and Heel Cord Stretch - Stand with back to wall. Place noodle under ankle and allow it to float up. You should feel a stretch in the back of the leg (hamstring). You can pull to foot up to get an additional stretch for the heel cords (calf). Hold for 20-30 seconds twice each leg.

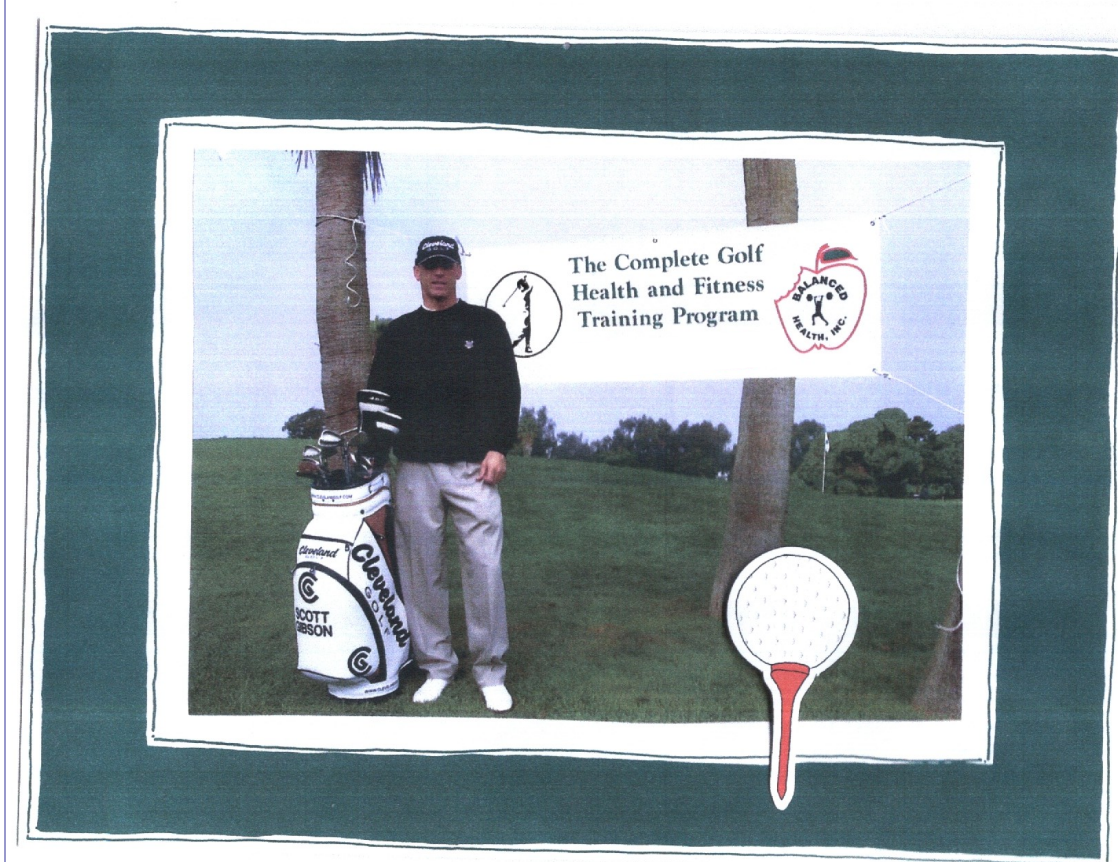
Inner Thigh Stretch - Standing with back to wall and noodle under leg (as above). Move leg out to side until feel stretch in inner thigh. Hold for 20-30 seconds twice each leg.

Hip Flexor Stretch - Stand facing wall holding onto edge of pool. Bend knee and place noodle under ankle. Let noodle float up while bringing leg back. Feel stretch in front of hip. Hold for 20-30 seconds twice each leg.

Quadriceps Stretch - Stand facing wall holding onto edge of pool. Bend knee and grab foot then pull up to buttocks. You should feel a stretch in the front of your thighs. Hold for 20-30 seconds twice each leg. (No noodle needed for this stretch!)

So lets get the kids outside enjoying the sunny days and 'using their noodles' to prepare for school and fall sports!

For more details about any of the information provided by Back to Work Physical Therapy, Balanced Health, Lakeway Aquatic Center or Professional Physical Therapy, or to inquire about the programs or services they offer, please contact PSPN at 1-877-360-PSPN (7776).



SUCCESS

The PROs Know...

Even professional athletes use Physical and Occupational Therapists to help them become better athletes and to also help them recover from an injury! Here's a testimonial about the services that Professional Golfer Scott Gibson received from Balanced Health in Fountain Valley, California:

"As a professional golfer playing on multiple professional golf tours, I was unable to play golf due to pain in my shoulder. I was referred to Balanced Health to figure out the problem and rehabilitate my shoulder. After surgery and a short time of efficient rehabilitation, I am now able to play golf with no pain in my shoulder, a more flexible body, and be in the best shape of my life. I have surprised myself with the changes I have felt and seen since I have been working with Balanced Health!"

Way to go, Balanced Health!

The Core is the Key

- By Densus Richards, Physical Therapist and Owner of Professional Physical Therapy in Mission Viejo, California

"We have helped many club and high school athletes return to the athletic field in better condition than before their injury. Our philosophy has been to strengthen the "core" even when the athlete is here for a knee or shoulder injury. We emphasize plyometrics (a method of training muscle elastic strength and explosiveness to enhance athletic performance) over weights for power and speed. Athletes are still going to do weight training, so technique (mainly body mechanics) is most important to lift efficiently and safely.

In working arms and legs, the trunk should always be stable (i.e. engage the abdominals and gluts to stabilize the trunk while doing curls, bench press, triceps, quad, hams, etc.) This "core" engagement is what athletes do as they prepare to throw, swing, kick, tackle, block and jump. So why not strengthen the core as part of any extremity rehab and especially any performance enhancing training regimen?"

Want to become the best you can be at your chosen sport, and prevent injuries?
Enroll in a Sports Enhancement/Injury Prevention program using one of our PSPN providers!

What is PSPN?

PSPN (Preferred Sports Provider Network) is a network of contracted physical and occupational therapy practices throughout the country who offer Sports Enhancement services at a discount. PSPN* was created to bring awareness to the proactive athletic services our practices provide. Not only do they provide injury and illness rehabilitation, they are also experts in strength, flexibility and agility improvement and injury prevention. Our providers have years of training and are truly the most experienced in providing quality preventive and sports fitness services.

Strive for Athletic Excellence

Enroll in a Sports Enhancement Program using one of PSPN's network providers. Whether you want to improve your golf game, RBI, rushing yards, or any other sport, PSPN's network of providers can help enhance your sports performance and prevent injury. Our contracted physical therapy clinics offering sports enhancement programs have gone through rigorous credentialing and meet stringent quality standards. Their programs help athletes and those striving to increase their physical ability to become stronger and perform better, and at a discounted rate.

Why use a PSPN Provider?

- PSPN providers are located within physical therapy clinics, and are highly trained Physical Therapists or Certified Athletic Trainers.
- On average, PSPN providers charge significantly lower than Athletic Training facilities.
- In addition, PSPN providers offer a 10% discount off of their already affordable prices.

*PSPN is a service of PREFERRED Therapy Providers, Inc., the largest rehabilitation network of its kind, representing private practice physical, occupational, and speech therapists throughout the country by contracting on their behalf with PPOs, Health Plans, and Third Party Payers.

Enhance your performance.
Become stronger.
And stay healthy.



Call PSPN to find a provider near you!

1-877-360-PSPN

