

## Patellar Tendinitis



Patellar Tendinitis is a common condition that can affect both recreational and highly competitive athletes. This is especially true for Pickleball players due to the constant moving/running. The Patellar “Tendon”, as it is commonly known, is actually a ligament. It connects our patella (knee cap) to our tibia (larger lower leg bone). The Patellar “Tendon” can become irritated/inflamed due to limited knee joint mobility, impaired flexibility musculature in the leg, weakness in leg muscles or over use.

**Symptoms:** Pain, inflammation will be located at the bottom of your knee cap to the top of your shin. This area may appear swollen/puffy and feel warm to the touch. Pain may be reproduced when palpating the area or when running, squatting, lunging, jumping, negotiating stairs.

**Causes:** Limited mobility of the hip or knee joints, tightness/weakness to muscles including quadriceps, hamstrings and over use. Sudden bursts of activity involving running, jumping, can lead to injury especially for those that do not play on a regular basis or are just beginning playing. Trigger points in the muscles can also be a cause as they do not allow the muscles to contract and relax properly. Tendons/ligaments can become weaker with age and this can be a contributing factor if not conditioned.

**Self-Care:** Although I know it is hard to do, not playing for a period of time while your symptoms subside is recommended. You can perform various stretches to relieve tightness, strengthening exercises for quadriceps/hamstrings, use ice on the region (20 minutes max, multiple times per day) and take over the counter medication such as anti-inflammatories, pain medication if you choose. Patellar “tendon” straps/braces can also be effective.

**Physical Therapy:** Physical Therapy should start with a comprehensive evaluation to determine the cause of your symptoms. Once this is determined, treatment may consist of using LASER, therapeutic ultrasound and/or electrical stimulation to decrease pain, inflammation and promote soft tissue healing. Other treatment may consist of manual therapy techniques, including soft tissue mobilization, trigger point release and joint mobilizations to improve knee,

hip mobility. Specific stretching, strengthening exercises may also be included along with therapeutic (kinesio) taping and instruction in self-care/home management.

**Recovery Time Frame:** Many factors can determine recovery time including duration of treatment before receiving treatment, age and other medical conditions. Allowing three to six weeks is a general guideline, but could be more or less depending on the above mentioned factors along with sticking to any treatment plan.

**Barr & Associates Physical Therapy**

1425 Hand Ave, Suite H

Ormond Beach, FL 32174

386-673-3535

[Barrandassociatesphysicaltherapy.com](http://Barrandassociatesphysicaltherapy.com)