

Top 10 Answers to Knee Pain

1. What do I do if my knees hurt when I walk up and down the stairs?

It is very common for knee pain to occur when walking down the stairs because our ankles do not flex properly. This limited ankle motion creates much more stress on the knees when we walk down the stairs. If you are walking down the stairs and your ankle pops up off the ground quickly or the foot turns to the outside this is a sign the ankles are the problem.

When we walk up the stairs and our knees hurt this is a sign that we might have weakness in the back side of the hip. The force required to lift our body up to the next step is mainly created by the contraction of our glutes. If they are weak the knee will have to much stress placed on them.

2. I've been told that I have no other choice but to get my knee replaced because they are bone on bone.

Well I can tell you that a study was done where they gave 10,000 people MRI and Xrays that had NO pain. They found that 80% of people over the age of 60 had signs of severe degeneration in their knees. Therefore, I would say that an image of "bone on bone" is not enough for me to get a knee replacement. I would first ask if your hips and ankle are moving properly because the knee is caught in the middle of those two with nowhere to go.

3. Should I wear a knee brace when I walk or run?

A knee brace should be worn when we are doing activities that are dangerous and could cause injury to the knee, like playing football or other impact sports. Otherwise, bracing a knee does very little good and can actually make the situation worse because it will do the job of the muscles surrounding the knee. Plus they are very expensive for almost not value.

4. Do the shoes that I wear have any effect on my knees?

I would say the answer depends. The position our feet are in can absolutely have an effect on how the knee functions. For instance, the more flat our foot it can create a more inward or knock kneed position. Also the flatter our foot is this can also create more of a rotational demand on our knees.

5. Does Glucosamine help with knee pain?

There is no evidence that taking the supplement glucosamine prevents or eliminates knee pain. I am however, a big fan of the placebo effect and research does support it!

6. Should I use Heat or Ice to help my knee pain?

It depends. If you have inflammation or swelling in the knee then ice should be used. If you have muscle soreness or tightness it would then be ok to use heat to relieve pain.

7. Why does my knee hurt when I walk?

This is a very complicated answer and the real answer should be it depends. The most common reason why a knee hurts during walking is that there is improper movement in the above joint in the hip and the below joint in the foot. The knee is stuck in the middle of those two joints with nowhere to go. Most commonly we see hip mobility problems in patients with knee pain and when the hips are restored to optimal motion the knee pain magically goes away.

8. Is it true that a meniscus tear can only be fixed by surgery?

Yes. But I would say that structurally fixing the meniscus does not mean that you will have pain free motion. In fact, 60% of people over the age of 50 have a degenerative meniscus tear without pain. That means that you can move pain free and live a healthy life without surgery. In fact often times surgery can actually cause more problems in other areas.

9. Can physical therapy help me relieve my knee pain?

85% of patients who attend and complete a full plan of care of physical therapy relieve their knee pain.

10. I've been told that my knee pain is due to me being overweight, is that true?

There is absolutely no evidence that body has any correlation or cause of knee pain. Improper movement or biomechanics causes knee pain. Not Weight!