

# How to Deal With Patellar Subluxation

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For a number of people who are active in [sports](#), Patellar Subluxation can be at the very least an uncomfortable inconvenience. At the worst, it can mean debilitation resulting in time off from work and loss of mobility. Patellar Subluxation is another way to describe a situation when the kneecap (the patella) temporarily slides to the outside of the knee joint resulting in knee instability and swelling. Here's how to deal with it.

Difficulty: Moderately Challenging

## Instructions

things you'll need:

- A complete examination of your knee by an orthopedic surgeon
- Knee braces (optional)
- Knee strengthening exercises

- 1 Patellar subluxation occurs when the patella, or the kneecap slides out of the trochlear groove, making the knee joint unstable. Although it is usually a temporary and minor inconvenience, it is frequently associated with swelling and decreased range of motion of the knee joint.
- 2 If your patella subluxes, try to stay off of your feet, apply ice and elevate your knee. Alternate ice packs on and off every hour for the next 24 hours.
- 3 Massage the knee, "milking" the accumulated fluid upwards toward the heart.
- 4 Apply a wide elastic bandage over the joint in between icings to prevent swelling.
- 5 Begin taking anti-inflammatories every 2 hours.
- 6 Once the swelling has subsided, make an appointment with your Physical Therapist. She will prescribe an [exercise](#) regimen aimed at strengthening the vastus medialis muscle in an effort to move the patella toward the inside of the trochlear notch.
- 7 If the knee continues to sublux, your orthopedic surgeon may suggest that you undergo a Lateral Release--Medial Reefing procedure to permanently re-align the patella in the trochlear groove.

## Tips & Warnings

- Maintain a regular exercise program that emphasizes resistance training for the quadriceps (the thigh muscles).
- Pay particular attention to strengthening the vastus medialis muscle.
- Wear an open popliteal knee brace to keep your knee cap in its proper location in the trochlear groove.
- If your knee subluxes, avoid standing on your feet or exerting pressure on the knee joint. The swelling is your body's way of telling you that it needs rest.