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Knee Pain with Cycling

If you have pain related to cycling...

LOPT therapists have strengthening and stretching programs to help alleviate your pain and get you back on the road or trails.



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Knee Pain with Cycling

Are you a new cyclist? Riding more to save gas? An athlete trying to achieve fitness or competitive goals? These are situations where overuse injuries can occur. Knee pain is a common cycling injury. Pain can be localized to different areas of the knee based on the contributing cause of the pain. Two of those contributing factors are training errors and improper fit of bike.

Training Errors

Improper Stretching

Stretching of the hamstrings, quads, gluts and lower legs is crucial to promote flexibility of the muscles that generate power for the bicycle. Proper stretching also prevents back and arm/hand pain.

Too Much, Too Soon

If you are a new cyclist or plan to increase your mileage, remember to gradually work toward your goal to allow your body to adapt.

Low Cadence

Your pedal rpm's should be between 80-90. Low rpm's lead to over loading of the patellar tendon and the patella against the knee joint. Change gears, especially when climbing, to achieve a higher cadence.

Equipment Factors

Saddle Height

The knee should flex to 110 degrees and extend to about 35 degrees of flexion. If the saddle is too low, the knee flexes greater than 110 degrees, causing stress to the patella. With the saddle too high, more stress is placed on the hamstrings and IT band.

Saddle Position

The ideal position is with the front of the knee over the ball of the foot, with the pedal at the 3 o'clock position. A saddle too far forward leads to stress at the front of the knee, which can result in patellar tendonitis.

Cleat Placement

An internally rotated cleat (causing the tibia to be externally rotated) leads to patellar tendonitis or IT band stress. Externally rotated cleats lead to medial knee stress.