

## Osgood-Schlatter Disease

Osgood-Schlatter disease affects the knees of adolescents. Children and adolescents who are involved in a lot of running and jumping activities are prone to developing this condition, marked by pain just below the kneecap. High-impact activities forcefully and repetitively exert the quadriceps muscles located in the front of the thigh. Osgood-Schlatter disease is inflammation at the site where the quadriceps attach to the tibia (shin bone) via the patellar tendon. The patellar tendon may begin to pull away from the tibia resulting in pain and swelling.

Osgood-Schlatter disease occurs more often in athletic kids than in nonathletes. It generally develops in boys (mainly ages 10 to 15) slightly more frequently than girls (mainly ages 8 to 13). It may occur in just one or both knees. Besides pain, Osgood-Schlatter disease usually produces tenderness, swelling, and a characteristic "bump" over the quadriceps attachment (tibial tuberosity) just below the kneecap. Symptoms may vary from person to person but generally increase during activity (especially high-impact exercise) and decrease with rest.

Fortunately, Osgood-Schlatter disease is a temporary condition, though it may last 12-24 months. Children and adolescents may need to slightly limit their activity in response to the symptoms. Performing a good warm-up and cool-down, including stretching exercises, before and after activity may prevent or lessen the severity of symptoms. A carefully supervised strengthening program may also lessen the symptoms of Osgood-Schlatter disease, and prevent other injuries as well.

The above is intended as general information only. Be sure to contact your physician for advice on your own specific medical problems.