



# Next Step Newsletter

Next Step  
Physical Therapy  
(516) 681- 8070

February, 2008

*Giving you information and answers to any physical therapy, health or fitness related questions*

## Knee Problems: The knee "cap"

Have you ever had pain located around your knee "cap"? If you did, you're not alone. This problem affects a lot of people. Typically, the pain is most evident when squatting down, climbing stairs or sitting with the knee's bent for too long. This pain syndrome is sometimes referred to as "movie-goer's" syndrome because often times a person's knee would get very sore from sitting down in a cramped seat for a long time—like when you go to the movies.

The knee "cap" is actually called the patella. It is situated right in front of the long thigh bone (femur) and when you bend and straighten the knee, the patella moves up, down, left, right, and tilts as well. Your large thigh muscles in the front (quadriceps) has a tendon that runs directly over the top of the patella as it travels farther down the leg and when the muscle tightens it compresses the patella backward towards the femur right behind it. This compressive force is often the cause of the knee pain, as this compression occurs throughout the day and the amount of the force can be up to 10x the force of your own bodyweight (like when we climb a stair).

The angle that we keep our knee bent also affects the amount of force between the back of the patella and the underlying femur. For instance, when we keep our knees bent, like when we're sitting, this position places the patella in direct contact with the femur. This is not the case when we fully straighten the knee—which is what most people who have this problem realize because it relieves the pain when you fully straighten the knee.

There are a few other reasons as to why you can develop this problem and it's up to your physical therapist to properly determine the reasons. Fortunately, this problem can be effectively treated by physical therapy. That's good news, otherwise a lot of us wouldn't be able to go out and see our favorite movies without a whole lot of knee pain.

### Updates

**Welcome to the Next Step Newsletter!**

**Win a pair of movie tickets!!**

**The first 2 people to call us with the answer to this question wins a pair of movie tickets.**

**Do you have an increased risk of arthritis if you jog a lot????**

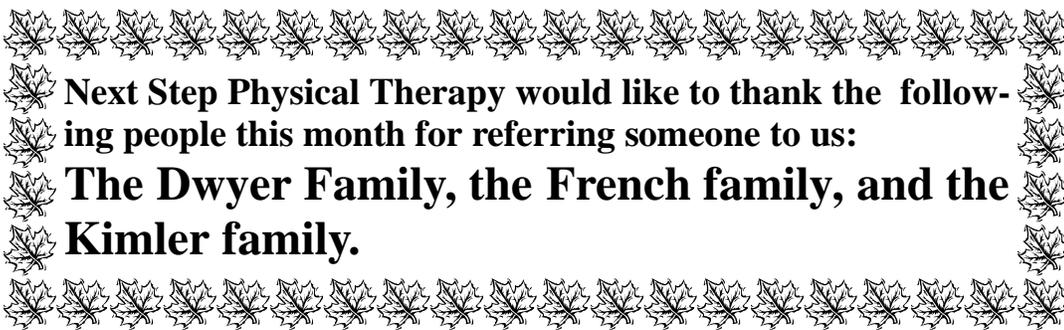
• If you have a friend or family member that you think could use our help please let us know or have them call us.

• If you would like more information on any of the topics discussed here please give us a call.

• If you have a question that you would like to have answered (maybe in the next newsletter) please don't hesitate to call.

• What topics are you interested in and would like to see in the newsletter? Let us know.

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**Next Step Physical Therapy would like to thank the following people this month for referring someone to us:**

**The Dwyer Family, the French family, and the Kimler family.**

P.L asks "Can you get arthritis from running or jogging all your life?"

Great question! Arthritis causes degeneration of a joint, and that makes sense that if you abuse your joints that you increase your risk of arthritis. That is not 100% true. As a matter of fact, there is a lot of research looking at this very question. One study followed runners for many years and determined that regular jogging did not increase the risk of arthritis. Believe it or not, genetics play an important role in developing arthritis, otherwise how could you explain the fact that I treat many individuals with arthritis who haven't exercised a day in their life (until now). One thing that we do know is that if you damage the joint, for example from a cartilage tear or a bone bruise, you increase your likelihood of developing arthritis. When we hear about the retired football player who can't walk at age 50 due to arthritis, it's not because he led an overly active lifestyle, it's because he sustained many injuries to the joint previously.