



Bursitis

Definition: Bursitis is an inflammation (swelling) of a bursa sac. A bursa is a fluid filled sac that is located throughout the body to protect and cushion joints, tendons and ligaments.

Common Terms: This is sometimes called housemaid's knee

Typical Mechanism of Injury: Bursitis is typically caused by an irritation of a bursa sac secondary to overuse and repetitively stressing joints or causing friction. Traumatic events, infections and disease, may also be causes to this condition.

Common Signs and Symptoms: With this condition the inflamed bursa becomes enlarged. Enlarged bursas can cause an intense amount of pain during all forms of movement, possibly limiting the range of motion of the given joint involved. Point tenderness, a reddish tint, and heat may all be present with this condition.

Common Treatment: The best treatment for this condition is rest with immobilization of the involved structure for a limited period of time. It is important to avoid compressing the area when immobilizing the affected area. Other methods such as using ice, elevation and taking non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications will help reduce the swelling and pain. Rehabilitation programs may be developed in order to strengthen the muscles surrounding the bursa. Immobilization should not occur for an extended period of time as it may lead to secondary complications. Corticosteroids may be injected in order to reduce pain and inflammation. One injection is usually all it takes to reduce symptoms. If the bursa is caused by a bacterial infection the use of antibiotics would be prescribed in order to fight off the infection. In some cases the bursa may be drained or even surgically removed.

Prevention: In regards to preventing bursitis one should stretch before engaging in activities as well as exercise on a regular basis in order to increase strength to protect your joints. Taking frequent breaks among activities is a key factor to give your muscles and joints time to recover.

Expectations: This condition is more common in areas such as the shoulder, elbow, knee, hip, and ankle. Bursitis is usually an acute condition that lasts a few weeks. Cases of bursitis that last longer or do not respond well to treatment should be referred to a physician.



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DEPARTMENT OF ORTHOPAEDICS & SPORTS MEDICINE

Carol & Frank Morsani Center for Advanced Health Care * 13330 USF Laurel Dr * Tampa, Florida 33612 * (813) 396-9625

* FAX (813) 396-9195 * www.health.usf.edu

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