

Eccentric Patella Tendon Exercises

Patella tendinopathy is a common condition in athletes involved in explosive sports like sprinting and basketball. It causes a well localised pain and tenderness over the front of the knee. The key to managing this problem is through modification of activity combined with a progressive eccentric strength program. This program involves a series of squats using a decline board. The lowering down phase of these squats is the important bit. You should use the 'good' leg to stand up again to get back to the start position.

The program involves three sets of 15 slow repetitions on a 25° decline board. You should do a slow controlled lower over a count of three. Between sets you should rest for about two minutes. These exercises should be done twice a day for twelve consecutive weeks.



If you develop pain during the exercises this is okay... in fact pain is probably required to stimulate tendon remodelling. We do not want the pain to be becoming progressively worse however. Use some simple pain relief or ice massage to treat this pain. If the exercises are becoming 'easy' we would like you to add some weight. Either use hand weights or wear a backpack containing a few kilos. It is better to do more repetitions overall than to use more weight.