

How to Use a Massage Gun on Patellar Tendonitis

What is Patellar Tendonitis?

Patellar tendonitis is an injury to the tendon connecting your kneecap, (patella) to your shinbone. The patellar tendon works with the muscles at the front of your thigh (quadriceps) to extend your knee so that you can jump, kick, and run. In fact, patellar tendonitis is also known as jumper's knee and is most common in athletes whose sports involve frequent jumping (basketball, volleyball, and high jump would be three examples). However, even people who do not participate in jumping sports can get patellar tendinitis.



(Shown in red)

In using massage, we would recommend massaging the quadricep muscles as well as the tendon itself. The four quadricep muscles blend and attach into the patella which then attaches to the shinbone by way of the patellar tendon.

The patellar tendon can develop microtears and inflammation often from overuse of the tendon. You will perform cross fiber massage on the tendon, but you first start with a general massage to the quadriceps. You want to keep them supple and mobile to decrease the amount of stress on the patella and patella tendon. Massage can be performed across the muscle fibers and lengthwise. Also attempt to perform flossing while massaging the quadriceps muscle (bend and straighten the knee while massaging the quadriceps).



Cross-fiber Massage on the tendon

This massage should be performed across the fibers of the tendon. The massage should be aggressive if tolerated. Try the ball head attachment in a side fashion not directly on the tendon. If the pain does not improve within 30 seconds and in fact gets worse - STOP IMMEDIATELY. Continue to massage the quadricep and try the tendon again in a few days. The tendon massage if tolerated can be performed up to 15 minutes a day. If you begin to tolerate the ball attachment, try the flat head with the rounded sides. Again, use in a side fashion and use on the sides of the Achilles tendon.



For the Quadriceps you can consider use of the following attachments. Head attachment choice can be based on the following:

- a. *Big Round Head Attachment*: Good for larger muscle groups like the glutes, quadriceps, or hamstrings. Allows you to cover more surface area. Moderate in aggressiveness.



- b. *Small Round Head Attachment*: Less aggressive to moderate. Great for tendonitis if used sideways.



(Big & Small Round Head)

- c. *Air-filled (Pneumatic) Attachment*: Probably the least aggressive head. Great for use around bony surfaces and sensitive muscle groups. Good for relaxation.



- d. *Bullet Head Attachment*: Aggressive. We have found to be helpful with treating trigger points or knots.



e. *Plastic Flat Head*: Moderate. Good on IT band, Pectoralis Major (with ribs underneath), or Plantar Fascia (bottom of foot). Great for tendonitis if used sideways.



f. *Steel Flat Head*: (Can be heated up or cooled down prior to use). Moderate to Aggressive.



g. *Knobby Attachments*: Generally, for larger muscles. More aggressive.



h. *Field Goal*: Can be used along both sides of the spine. Also, some have recommended its use on the Achilles tendon.

