

## How to Fix Your Knee & Stop Clicking, Popping, or Creaking

The first question you should ask does the “knee noise” need fixing. It depends. In general, if the clicking, popping, or grinding is not accompanied by pain, swelling, locking, or weakness. You may hold off on seeing a clinician. If there is pain, swelling, locking, or weakness, you may want to choose to see a physician.

Treating the knee noise if accompanied by pain, swelling, locking, or weakness will depend on the type of problem you have. Here are some options for the following problems:

1. Cavitation:
  - a. At times the noise you hear is due to a build-up and release of gas bubbles in your knee joint. When the bubbles burst this is called cavitation.
2. Treatment:
  - a. This truly a situation in which no solution is needed - however there should not be any pain to accompany it.
3. Ligaments and tendons:
  - a. Some ligaments and tendons can “catch” as they slide over a bony bump and make a snapping sound as they snap back into place. An example of this can be the iliotibial band (I.T. Band) as it crosses over the bump on the outside of the knee while the knee bends and straightens. Over time, if the I.T. band gets irritated, it can result in pain.



Treatment:

Massage the Tensor Fascia Lata. Also massage the I.T band. You will not be able to affect the band per se - but if it is adhered down - you may get it moving better.



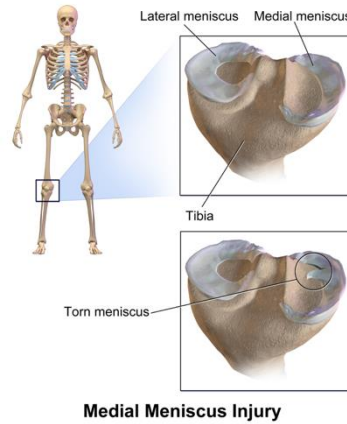
(IT Band Area)



1. Cartilage tear:

- a. A cartilage tear can occur with an injury or accident. A tear can also occur spontaneously as you age. If you have a piece of loose cartilage in your knee it can block movement, and/or cause popping and

clicking. If cartilage is truly blocking movement of the knee - you should see your doctor.



Treatment:

Strengthening of the quadricep may be in order (isometric over a pillow) – 5 second hold (3 x 10) 3 x per week.

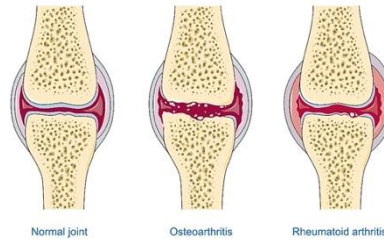


Also, continuous movement (pain free) can be tried - biking, FitGlide, swimming. Also, weight bearing activities such as walking, Tai Chi, etc.

## 2. Osteoarthritis:

- a. If the smooth cartilage that covers the end of your bones has worn down, flaked off, and/or become roughened you may experience frequent clicking, popping, or grinding sounds. Clinicians may refer to this condition as “bone on bone”.

Osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis



Treatment:

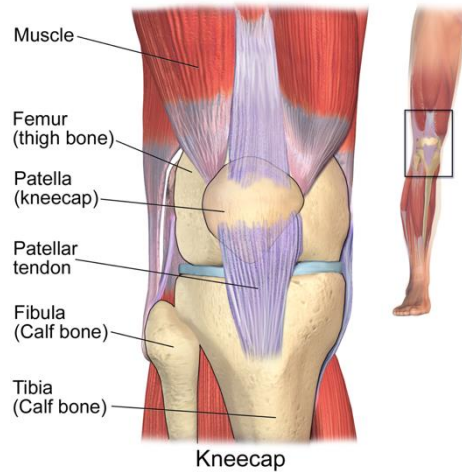
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### 3. Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome:

- a. There is another joint between the kneecap and the end of the femur. The underside of the kneecap (patella) can get roughened up and one can experience grinding, popping, or crunching. The kneecap may also not track correctly in the groove and result in the same sounds.



**Treatment:**

Stretch kneecap in all 4 directions - DO Not DO if you have loose joint or rheumatoid arthritis. Strengthen hip external rotators - clam shell.



Scar tissue - if some of the soft tissue in or around your knee was injured and healed with scar tissue, that scar tissue can catch on surrounding surfaces and create joint noise.

Treatment:

Perform cross fiber friction massage over scarred area. 3-5 minutes (2-3x) a day. Back off treatment if sore or nontolerant.



(Cross Friction Massage Over Quadricep Tendon)