**Knee Pain Referral Guideline**

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<tr>
<th>HIGH RISK</th>
<th>MODERATE RISK</th>
<th>LOW RISK</th>
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<td><strong>SYMPTOMS AND LABS</strong>&lt;br&gt;Severe pain&lt;br&gt;Not able to walk or bear-weight&lt;br&gt;Severe swelling&lt;br&gt;History of traumatic injury (twisting, “pop” or locking of knee)&lt;br&gt;Calf pain or leg swelling&lt;br&gt;Instability or giving way of knee&lt;br&gt;Evidence of infection or inflammation</td>
<td><strong>SYMPTOMS AND LABS</strong>&lt;br&gt;Moderate pain&lt;br&gt;Able to walk with limp&lt;br&gt;Moderate swelling&lt;br&gt;History of acute or chronic onset&lt;br&gt;Some catching, locking or giving way&lt;br&gt;Taking OTC pain medication as needed</td>
<td><strong>SYMPTOMS AND LABS</strong>&lt;br&gt;Mild pain&lt;br&gt;Able to walk without limp&lt;br&gt;Minimal swelling&lt;br&gt;No history of traumatic injury&lt;br&gt;No catching, locking or giving way&lt;br&gt;No pain medication needed</td>
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| **SUGGESTED PREVISIT WORKUP**<br>Schedule urgent appointment with sports medicine<br>Emergent evaluation if evidence of infection or inflammation | **SUGGESTED WORKUP**<br>Consider radiographs<br>Schedule routine appointment with sports medicine | **SUGGESTED MANAGEMENT**<br>RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation)<br>Ibuprofen and/or acetaminophen as needed<br>Therapeutic exercise<br>Activity modification and low impact activity |

**CLINICAL PEARLS**

- Knee pain can affect individuals of all ages and activity levels
- Knee pain can be due to pathology within the knee joint or outside of the knee joint
- Obtaining radiographs can help to diagnose arthritic knee pain
- Losing weight as well as strengthening the hip, gluteal and core muscles can often help to decrease knee pain

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These clinical practice guidelines describe generally recommended evidence-based interventions for the evaluation, diagnosis and treatment of specific diseases or conditions. The guidelines are: (i) not considered to be entirely inclusive or exclusive of all methods of reasonable care that can obtain or produce the same results, and are not a statement of the standard of medical care; (ii) based on information available at the time and may not reflect the most current evidenced-based literature available at subsequent times; and (iii) not intended to substitute for the independent professional judgment of the responsible clinician(s). No set of guidelines can address the individual variation among patients or their unique needs, nor the combination of resources available to a particular community, provider or healthcare professional. Deviations from clinical practice guidelines thus may be appropriate based upon the specific patient circumstances.

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