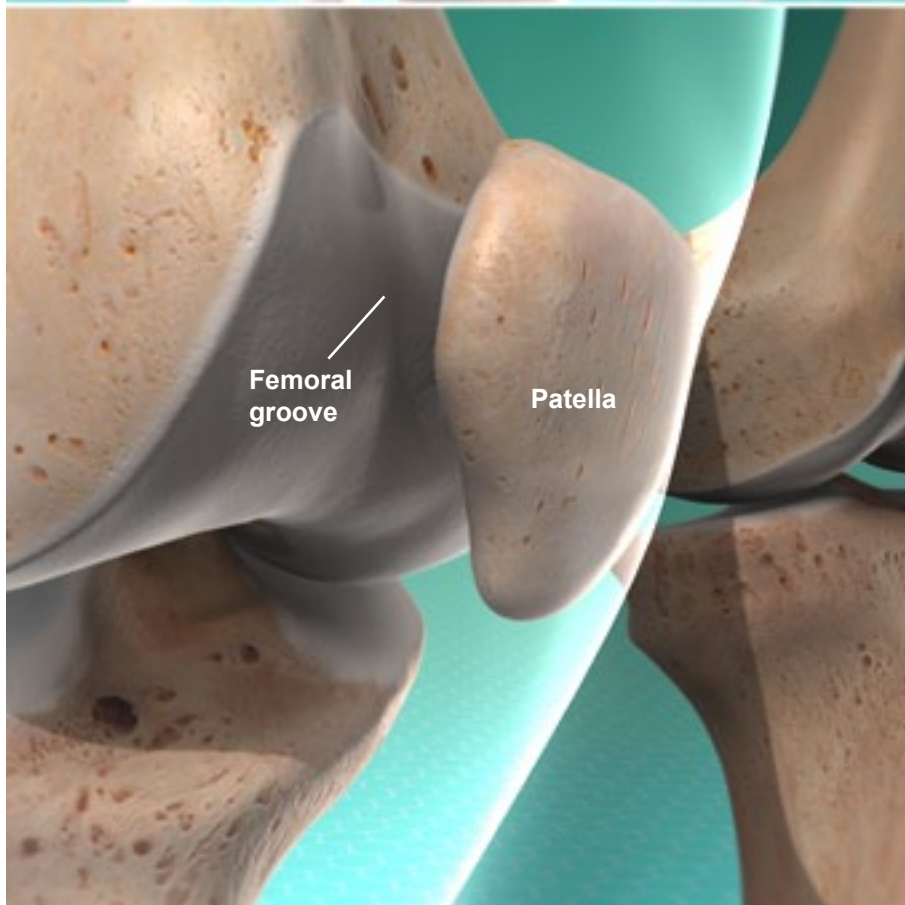
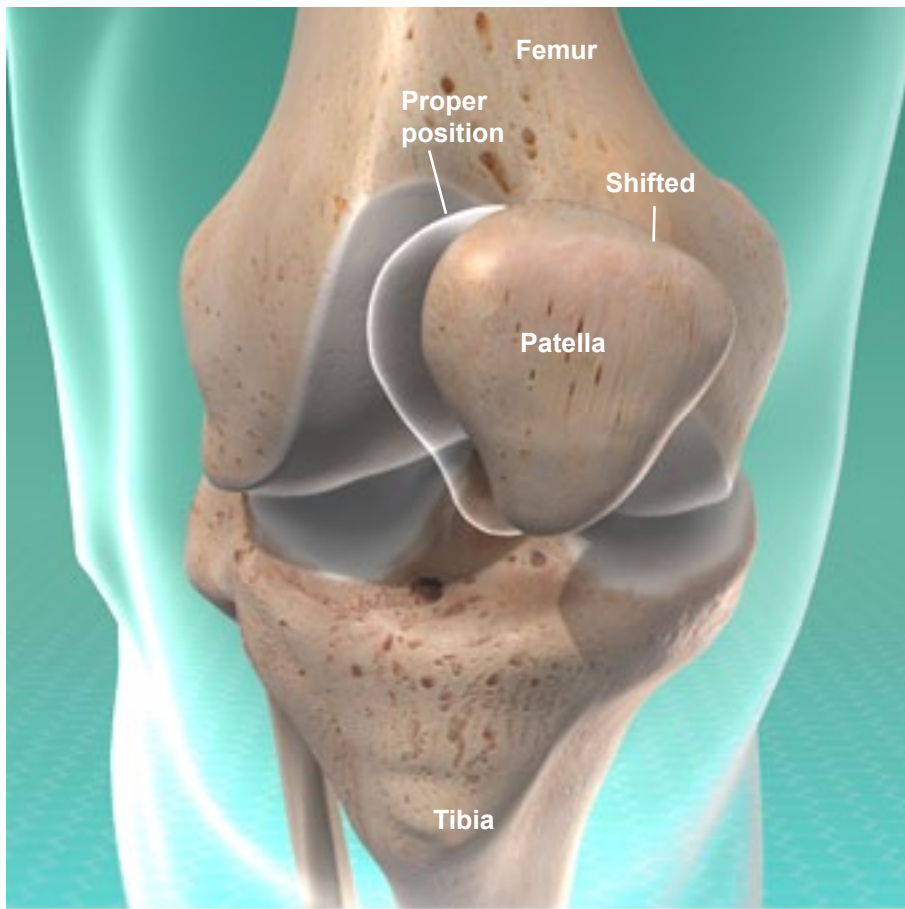


Patellar Tracking Disorder



Overview

This is a problem with the alignment of the patella (the bone at the front of the knee, commonly called the "kneecap"). With this disorder, the patella shifts out of its normal track as you bend or extend your knee.

Causes

Patellar misalignment can be caused by structural problems with the bones of your leg. A shallow femoral groove, for example, can let the patella slip out of position. Misalignment can also be caused by abnormal tightness or looseness of the muscles, tendons and ligaments that support the patella. Misalignment can result from repetitive stress. And, it can be caused by a knee injury.

Symptoms

Symptoms may include pain in the front of your knee. It may be painful to walk up or down stairs. It may also hurt to jump, squat or kneel. You may feel sensations of grinding or popping when you bend or extend your leg. Your knee may also feel unstable.

Treatment

Treatment options include rest, ice and medications for pain. Taping the knee or using a knee brace can help keep your patella aligned properly. Shoe inserts may help. You may also benefit from physical therapy. If these are not helpful, you may benefit from surgery. Your healthcare provider can create a care plan that is right for your needs.