Patellar Dislocation

In a **dislocation** of the patella, the the kneecap has slipped out of the groove it rides in on the front of the knee. It can usually be guided back into its normal position without much difficulty. Often it goes back into position by straightening the leg. X-rays may be taken to make sure a *fracture* (bone break) is not present. Your caregiver may look into your knee joint with an instrument much like a pencil sized telescope (*arthroscopy*). This may be done to make sure other problems are not present. Other problems include loose cartilage bodies that are not visible on x-rays. Often nothing more may be needed other than a brief period of immobilization followed by the exercises your caregiver recommends. If this becomes a *recurrent* (happens several times) and *chronic* (long lasting) problem, *surgery* (an operation) may be needed to prevent this.

LET YOUR CAREGIVERS KNOW ABOUT THE FOLLOWING:

- Allergies
- Medications taken including herbs, eye drops, over the counter medications, and creams
- Use of steroids (by mouth or creams)
- Previous problems with anesthetics or novocaine
- Tendency toward highly flexible joints.
- Possibility of pregnancy, if this applies
- History of blood clots (*thrombophlebitis*)
- History of bleeding or blood problems
- Previous surgery
- Other health problems
- History of anesthetic problems in your family.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- You may resume normal diet and activities as directed or allowed.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Use crutches as instructed.
- Apply ice to the injured knee for15 to 20 minutes, four times per day while awake, for 2 days. Put the ice in a plastic bag and place a thin towel between the bag of ice and your cast, splint or wrap.
- If your caregiver has given you instructions for exercises and range of motion to do, make sure to do them as instructed. This helps prevent future recurrences. Use the brace or knee immobilizer as instructed.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OCCUR:

- Increased pain or swelling of the knee which is not relieved with medication.
- Increasing *inflammation* (warmth or redness) in the knee.
- Problems with continued dislocations.
- Locking or catching of your knee.

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