



Barrhaven Chiropractic Health Centre

3 Keys to Solving Knee Pain when Cycling

Doctor - "Well John, it is getting better; but continue icing it as frequently as possible, keep doing your exercises and I'll see you in a few days...Oh and no riding for a few weeks!"

John - "A few weeks? We live in Ottawa...a few weeks of no cycling and I've missed the entire season!"

For any cyclist enthusiast out there, I'm sure at some point in your cycling experience, you have been in a similar position as our friend John. The cause? Knee pain!

Knee pain is one of the most common cycling injuries. Most knee injuries are as a result of overuse or *repetitive strain*. Overuse injuries occur when a tissue becomes damaged by repetitive loading. Repetitive activity (i.e. cycling) fatigues the tissue and without adequate recovery, the microtrauma stimulates inflammation that damages the tissue and leads to injury. In chronic cases, continued activity produces degenerative changes that lead to weakness, loss of flexibility, and chronic pain.

Overuse injuries in cyclists are usually a result of one of three things;

1. Altering the mode, intensity or duration of your rides
2. Poor fitting bike
3. Physical factors or deficiencies such as, muscle imbalances, leg inflexibility, wide pelvis, anatomical short leg etc.

Solutions

1. Start slow

- The first few weeks back on the bike are critical in allowing your body and muscles time to adjust to the lay off. Pedal with low resistance and refrain from hard riding or hill work.

2. Make sure your bike fits

- The most commonly seen issues with a poor fitting bike are the seat being too high/too low, too far forward/too far back, crank arm is too long or cleats turned in/out too much. (If your not sure what to look for take your bicycle to a local bike shop and ask for a bike fitting)

3. Biomechanical Analysis

- If your training routine hasn't changed, your bicycle is a perfect fit and you're still experiencing knee pain or chronic injuries, then schedule a physical/biomechanical assessment with a health professional who is knowledgeable about cycling. Assessing muscle imbalances, gait, posture, leg length differences and/or muscle weakness may help determine why you are experiencing pain or chronic knee injuries.

Happy Pedaling

Dr. Franco Vincelli

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Let's have a healthy cycling season!

