

# RUNNER'S WORLD

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Injury Prevention: **Injury Prevention**

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## Cure Runner's Knee

Here's how to get rid of this painful runner's ailment

By **Jim and Phil Wharton**

Patellofemoral pain syndrome got its nickname for an obvious and very unfortunate reason--it's common among runners. The stress of running can cause irritation where the kneecap (patella) rests on the thighbone. The resulting pain can be sharp and sudden or dull and chronic, and it may disappear while you're running, only to return again afterward. While biomechanical issues may be to blame, the cause can often be traced back to poorly conditioned quadriceps and tight hamstrings. Weak quads aren't able to support the patella, leading it to track out of alignment, and inflexible hamstrings can put pressure on the knee. If you want to treat and avoid another bout with runner's knee, add strengthening and stretching to your routine. The three-step quadriceps exercise below is a good place to start. It works the muscles on the front, inside, and outside of your thigh. Do 10 reps of each part on both legs.

### Quad Strengtheners

**Front Thigh:** Lie on your back with an ankle weight on your right leg. Fully extend that leg and lock your knee. Keeping your foot relaxed and in a neutral position, lift your leg straight up toward your head as far as you can. Your goal should be to position your leg perpendicular to your body. Return to the starting position.

**Inner Thigh:** Do the same exercise, but this time, turn out your right leg (toes pointing away from you) to target your inner thigh muscles.

**Outer Thigh:** Repeat the same exercise again with your right leg turned in (toes pointing toward you) to isolate the muscles of your outer thigh.

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