

Screening and Referral Tools (SRTs) TRAUMATIC and ACUTE KNEE PAIN

Soldier Reports With Traumatic
or Acute Knee Pain

RED FLAGS for Knee Trauma:

Fracture

- Ottawa Knee Rules apply
- Deformity

ACL Rupture / Int Derangement

- Locked knee (ROM < 10 - 90 degrees)
- Tense effusion onset < 4 hours

Patellar - Quad Tendon Rupture

- Inability to perform straight leg

Neuro-Vascular Injury

- Knee dislocation (NV injury or fx)
- Altered circulation or temperature
- Altered motor or sensory exam

Infection

- Local redness, swelling, increased temperature, exudate with or without constitutional symptoms

Uncertain Exam

- Imaging - if you have high index of suspicion for fracture - order films regardless of Red Flags

Yes

X-Rays - A/P Lat

**Call Ortho TODAY
discuss management**

★RICE

Relative rest as designated on profile

Ice compress 2-3 times daily for 20 minutes

Compression by use of elastic bandage

Elevation of affected joint above heart during periods of rest

Ligament instability
Patellar apprehension
Effusion/Edema
Decreased ROM

Yes

- X-Rays - AP, Lat
- MRI not indicated acutely
- Profile (A) x 7 - 10 days
- Crutches (weight bear as tolerated)
- Knee Immobilizer (if lig unstable/pat app)
- Tylenol/NSAIDs PRN for analgesia
- **Rice★**
- Referral: PT, Sports Med, or Ortho as indicated, in 72 hrs

No

No

- Profile (B) x 1 - 2 weeks
- Crutches PRN (WBAT)
- Tylenol/NSAIDs for analgesia
- **Rice★**
- Re-evaluate at end of profile

Symptoms
Persist?

Yes

- Consider X-Rays - AP, Lat
- Profile (B) x 1 - 2 weeks
- Tylenol/NSAIDs for analgesia
- **Rice★**
- Referral: PT, Sports Med, or Ortho as indicated, in 7 days

Mostly
Resolved

- Progressive RTD Profile PRN
- Tylenol/NSAIDs PRN
- RTD end of profile anticipated

SPECIAL TESTS EXAM

Ligament Instability

- (+) Lachmans (ACL)
- (+) Post Drawer (PCL)
- (+) Valgus Stress 0/30 (MCL)
- (+) Varus Stress 0/30 (LCL)

Patella Dislocation

- (+) Patellar Apprehension

Meniscal Tear

- (+) Thessaly's Test

OTTAWA KNEE RULES (Guide to X-Rays after trauma in adults)

- Age over 55 years
- Tenderness at head of fibula
- Isolated tenderness of patella
- Inability to flex > 90 degrees
- Inability to walk four (4) weight bearing steps immediately after injury AND in the Emergency Department

PROFILES

(A) Use crutches at all times; knee immobilizer (if prescribed). No running, jumping, marching, squatting, push ups, sit ups, ruck sack, body armor, no standing > 30 minutes.

(B) Crutches at all times (if prescribed). No running, jumping, marching, ruck sack. Walk own pace up to 1 mile. Sit ups and well-leg push ups at own tolerance, body armor wear up to 2 hrs. May fire assigned weapon if able to apply appropriate firearm safety.

References

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