

# ORTHOTIC DEVICES FOR TREATING PATELLOFEMORAL PAIN SYNDROME

D'hondt Norman E, Aufdemkampe Geert, Kerkhoffs Gino MMJ, Struijs Peter AA, Verheul Claire, van Dijk C N

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## ABSTRACT

### Background

Patellofemoral pain syndrome is a frequently reported condition in active adults. A wide variety of conservative treatment strategies have been described. As yet, no optimal strategy has been identified. Application of orthotic devices e.g. knee braces, knee straps, forms of taping of the knee, active training devices, knee sleeves and inlay soles to support the foot have been advocated to treat this condition.

### Objective

To assess the effectiveness of foot and knee orthotics for treatment of patellofemoral pain syndrome.

### Criteria for considering studies for this review

We searched the Cochrane Bone, Joint and Muscle Trauma Group Specialised Register, the Cochrane Controlled Trials register (Issue 2, 2000), MEDLINE (January 1966 to March 2000; EMBASE (January 1988 to March 2000); CINAHL (January 1982 to March 2000) and PEDro (up to March 2000). Relevant orthotic companies were contacted. The date of the most recent search was May 2000.

### Selection criteria

All randomised and quasi-randomised trials comparing the effectiveness of knee or foot orthotics for treatment of patellofemoral pain syndrome were selected. Trials describing the use of orthotic devices in conjunction with operative treatment were excluded.

### Data collection and analysis

Three reviewers independently assessed methodological quality of the identified trials by use of a modified version of the Cochrane Bone, Joint and Muscle Trauma Group assessment tool, consisting of 11 items. Two reviewers extracted data without blinding. Trialists were contacted to obtain missing data.

### Main results

Five trials involving 362 participants were included in this review. Five other trials await possible inclusion if further information can be obtained. Due to clinical heterogeneity, we refrained from statistical pooling and conducted analysis by grading the strength of scientific evidence. The level of obtained research-based evidence was graded as limited as all trials were of low methodological quality.

## **Authors' conclusions**

The evidence from randomised controlled trials is currently too limited to draw definitive conclusions about the use of knee and foot orthotics for the treatment of patellofemoral pain. Future high quality trials in this field are warranted.

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