

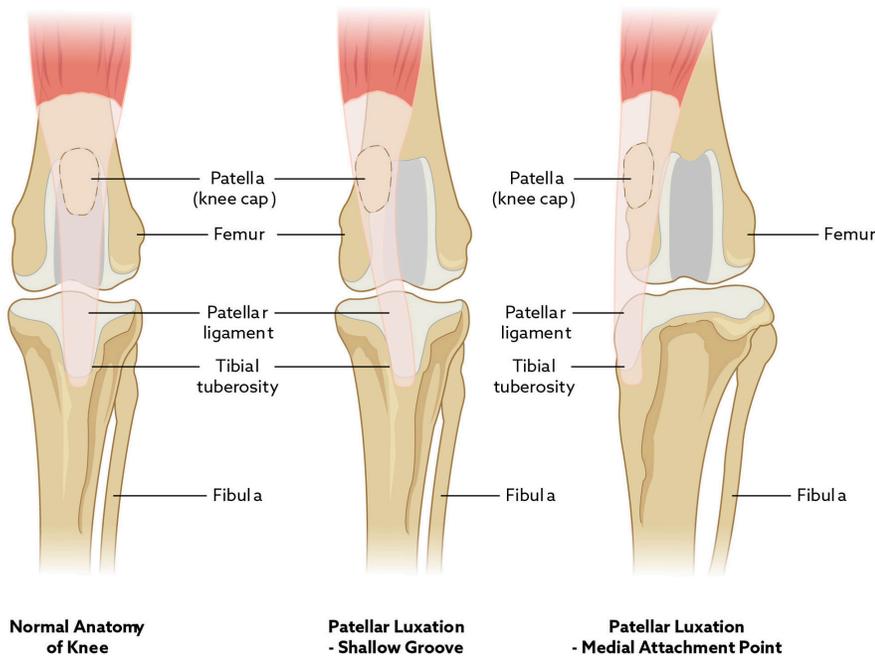


Decoding Luxating Patella



What is a “Luxating Patella” ?

A luxating patella in dogs—also called a dislocated knee—is a common condition in which the kneecap (patella) shifts sideways (luxates) away from its normal position at the front of the knee.



Most Affected Breeds:

- Boston Terrier
- Chihuahua
- Jack Russell Terrier
- Lhasa Apso
- Maltese
- Miniature/Toy Poodle
- Papillon
- Pekingese
- Pomeranian
- Shitzu
- Yorkshire Terrier



Genetic Causation:

- There are two main types of genetic problems that can lead to patella luxation.
- First type (and the most common) is an abnormally shallow groove between the leg bones, making it easy for the knee cap to pop out.
- Second type is a result of the tibia ligament being offset slightly; thus throwing off joint alignment and causing the kneecap to easily remove itself from socket.

Large Breed vs. Small Breed

- In large breed dogs, the groove is deep giving the patella a nice crevice to call home.
- However in smaller breed dogs, this groove is far more shallow, thus leaving more of kneecap hanging out and putting a greater strain on the ligament holding it in place.

How Serious Is This Condition?

It depends! Patellar luxation can occur at varying degrees of severity and whichever group your dog falls into will determine the best treatment option.

- **Grade 1:** The kneecap will pop out *occasionally*; when it does it will pop itself back in place.
- **Grade 2:** The kneecap may occasionally need a hand resetting itself, but when it is popped back into place it will stay there until the next incident. (*Only slightly more serious than Grade 1.*)
- **Grade 3:** The kneecap is popped out most of the time, and while it can be reinserted manually, it tends to pop itself *right back out again*.
- **Grade 4:** The kneecap is almost always outside of the groove and is *nearly impossible* to get it reinserted.

How Can I Help My Pet?

This condition is a degenerative condition; unfortunately it will get worse over time, **especially if left untreated**. Once limping has begun, a surgical repair will be your pet's only option. The *earlier* you begin supportive efforts and treatment, the *less likely* your pet will require surgery.

- **Daily Exercise:** Although this may seem counterintuitive, keeping your dog active is a great way to prevent the condition from getting worse. By building muscle tone and keeping them at a healthy body weight, you can reduce the effects of this condition substantially.
- **Joint Supplements:** There are plenty of veterinarian verified supplements designed to bolster joint health in dogs, so try adding one to their diet.
- **Diet and Weight Management:** There are a variety of prescription foods that contain a specially formulated diet designed to maximize joint health and rehabilitation.
- **Chiropractic/Acupuncture Treatment:** Having a specialist work on your pet's problem areas can help prevent degradation of the condition.
- **Medication:** For more serious cases, medicine like Carprofen or Vetriflex can help slow the condition and improve joint fluid production.
- **Surgery:** If your pet is in constant pain or limps frequently, the only remaining option is to have a surgical reshaping and alignment of the problem knee(s). This will result in the great comfort of your dog, greater mobility and an increase in their ability to run, jump and overall give them a better quality of life.