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# Be Kind to Your Knees!

Check us out:  
[www.back2health4you.com](http://www.back2health4you.com)

## What is there to know about your knees?

How many times do you hear of injuries where a person is hit from the side or twists their leg too fast and reports that they "tore their ACL"? Or think of the people you know with knee replacements, pins and wires that have been implanted during surgery.

Your knees are an important weight-bearing joint. For example when climbing up stairs your knees load with 2.5 times your body weight. And when walking down stairs they take on 3.5 times your body weight.

The knee joint itself is relatively weak but compensates with numerous, strong ligaments. They help to stabilize the articulating bones (femur, tibia, and patella) as well as give the joint strength.

Among other structures that make up the joint are two menisci which are found between the femur and tibia. The menisci serve several functions such as lubrication, and nutrition of the joint and act as shock absorbers. They also help to reduce friction during movement.

Bursae are fluid filled sacs that also help to reduce friction between bones and skin or tendons that run across the joint.

The mechanics of the knee make it very susceptible to trauma especially in sports related injuries. Common injuries/conditions that can affect your knees are:

- Torn meniscus
- Torn ACL

Knee injuries account for more time lost from competition by young athletes than any other type of surgery. They end more athletic careers and disable more athletes in later years than any other sports injury.

With direct trauma, surgery



- Bursitis
- Runner's Knee
- Osteoarthritis
- Weight problems

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## The Knee Knacker-ing North Shore Trail Run:

Well, it may be over for this year (July 13th, 2002) but at least you will know about it for NEXT year!

A challenging 30-mile race along the Baden-Powell Centennial Trail from Horseshoe Bay to Deep Cove, just north of Vancouver, B.C. A scenic but grueling 8000 foot climb and another 8300 feet to descend, Wildlife Magazine has recognized it as one of the 25 toughest races in North America.

With 175 runners who make the lottery each year maybe you can be one of them!

[www.kneeknacker.com](http://www.kneeknacker.com)

## If you're NOT thinking about your knees...think again!

The knee is our most vulnerable joint and according to Dr. Richard Villar, a specialist hip and knee surgeon, "it is also the most commonly injured joint in the body. More than 4.1 million North Americans will seek medical care each year for a knee problem"

may be the only option but here at Back to Health, we believe that not only will a preventative approach help but so will a remedial (depending on the condition). Many of the services and techniques used in the clinic are excellent post-surgery options

## What can chiropractic care do?

As there are many different conditions that can afflict the knee, so too are there many ways in which to treat it with chiropractic care.

Within a chiropractic treatment plan there are 3 stages of care: **relief, corrective and maintenance**. Many conditions are due to structural deformities and after the initial phase of relief care (getting rid of the symptoms), the corrective phase can focus on re-training and strengthening the knee joint in order to return it to it's normal condition. From there the

maintenance phase can continue to prevent the small problems from becoming larger ones. Corrective care may also require looking at symptoms stemming from the feet and you may be referred to our Kinesiologist for a foot scan or orthotic check.

In the case of post-operative surgery your Chiropractor can monitor the recovery and recommend a remedial exercise program to help improve strength, balance, and endurance.

Another form of therapy which is

highly effective for knee recovery is acupuncture. The effects of this ancient Chinese medicine include helping in the healing process as well as reducing swelling. An accurate health history and examination of the injured area would be performed before continuing with this treatment.



Chiropractic care and acupuncture are effective both pre and post-surgery

## How does Massage Therapy help?

Apart from relaxing the muscles and taking away some of the pain and discomfort surrounding the injured area, massage therapy has many other beneficial effects.

Fluid stroking techniques can help increase **circulation** and therefore **nutrition** to the compromised joint. An increase in blood circulation means that more cells involved in

regeneration and healing can reach the injured site.

Muscles that have been compensating for the weak joint (opposite leg bearing more weight) can become prone to tightness as they are not normally relied upon so much. Treating these structures and the injured joint itself can help **maintain range of motion** as well as **joint mobility**.

**"Fluid stroking techniques can help increase circulation and therefore nutrition to the compromised joint."**

Depending on the nature of the injury, adhesions may have formed around the muscles and

the use of **Active Release Technique** may be indicated.

## Reduce the risk!

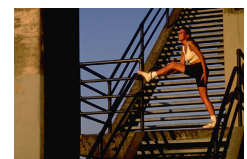
The risk of injury to the knee joint can be dramatically reduced by:

- Exercising regularly to keep your muscles strong
- Doing gentle stretching and flexibility exercises
- Taking the time to warm up before sports activities and to cool down after
- Avoiding activities that push the

- knee beyond its normal range of motion
- Making sure that your bicycle seat is adjusted to the correct height for you
- Not wearing shoes with cleats outside, or sticky-soled running shoes when play indoor sports as this footwear will prevent your foot from turning and a sharp change in direction can then twist the knee
- Taking it slow on downhill slopes

- Maintaining a healthy weight

\*[www.crha-health.ab.ca/hlthconn/items/knees](http://www.crha-health.ab.ca/hlthconn/items/knees)



Stretch before and after your activity to reduce tension and strain on your muscles.