

Baker's Cyst

Diagnosis Explanation:

A Baker's cyst (popliteal cyst) is a fluid-filled swelling that develops behind the knee due to excess joint fluid, often caused by knee injuries, arthritis, or inflammation. Symptoms include swelling, stiffness, and discomfort, particularly when bending or extending the knee. In some cases, the cyst can rupture, leading to sudden pain and calf swelling.

Specific Work Modifications:

- **If your job requires standing or walking:** Take breaks to rest your leg and avoid prolonged standing. Use a compression sleeve if needed.
- **If your job is desk-based:** Elevate your leg while sitting to reduce swelling. Perform gentle knee mobility exercises.
- **If your job involves heavy lifting:** Minimize deep knee bending and squatting. Consider using knee support.
- **Avoid:** Deep squats, kneeling, prolonged standing, and excessive walking on uneven surfaces.

Specific Activity Modifications:

- **If you run or play sports:** Reduce high-impact activities. Opt for low-impact options like swimming or cycling.
- **If you hike:** Use trekking poles and avoid steep inclines or rough terrains.
- **If you do yoga or Pilates:** Modify poses to avoid excessive knee flexion or deep squats.
- **Avoid:** Jumping, high-impact sports, deep knee bending, and prolonged weight-bearing activities.

Recommended Supplements:

- **Turmeric (Curcumin)** - 500-1000mg daily for inflammation reduction.
- **Glucosamine & Chondroitin** - 1500mg/1200mg daily to support joint health.
- **Collagen Peptides** - 10g daily for joint and soft tissue support.
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids** - 1000mg daily to help reduce joint inflammation.

Recommended Nutrition and Hydration:

- **Eat Anti-Inflammatory Foods** (leafy greens, berries, nuts, fatty fish).
- **Increase Protein Intake** (lean meats, tofu, eggs) to support tissue repair.
- **Consume Hydrating Foods** (cucumber, watermelon, citrus) to maintain joint fluid balance.
- **Limit Processed Foods & Sugars** to reduce inflammation.

- **Hydration:** Drink **8-10 cups of water daily** to maintain joint lubrication and reduce swelling.

Home Exercise Prescription:

Early Phase (Reducing Pain & Swelling):

- **Ankle Pumps** - Move ankle up and down to improve circulation, **10 reps, 3x/day**.
- **Heel Slides** - Gently slide heel toward buttocks to maintain knee flexibility, **10 reps, 3x/day**.
- **Seated Knee Extensions** - Slowly extend knee while seated, hold for 5 seconds, repeat **10 reps, 2x/day**.

Strengthening Phase (Once Swelling Improves):

- **Straight Leg Raises** - Keep knee straight, raise leg, hold 5 seconds, repeat **10x, 3x/day**.
- **Mini Squats** - Slight knee bends with support, **10 reps, 2x/day**.
- **Calf Raises** - Stand on toes, lower slowly, repeat **10 reps, 2x/day**.

Mobility & Stability Phase (Later Recovery):

- **Stationary Bike** - Low resistance cycling for **10-15 minutes/day**.
- **Balance Exercises** - Stand on one leg for 10 seconds, gradually increase time.
- **Step-Ups** - Step onto a low platform, push through heel, repeat **10 reps, 2x/day**.

Helpful Books:

1. *The Knee Injury Bible: Everything You Need to Know About Knee Pain, Prevention, and Treatment* - Kevin R. Stone, MD.
2. *Peak: The New Science of Athletic Performance That Is Revolutionizing Sports* - Marc Bubbs, ND.

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Contact a Key West orthopedic clinic or reach out to Dr. Jason Pirozzolo.