



POPLITEAL (BAKER'S) CYST

A popliteal (Baker's) cyst is swelling of the fluid-filled sac found in the back of your knee. It usually forms between parts of two muscles that meet at the knee: the gastrocnemius (calf muscle) and the semimembranosus (one of the hamstring muscles). Popliteal cysts are benign, meaning they are not dangerous. Most of the time, a Baker's cyst in a child will resolve on its own without treatment within 1-2 years. These cysts are usually bigger when the knee is straight and smaller when the knee is bent. The cyst size may change from day to day.

Causes

In children, Baker's cyst are usually found in kids between 4-7 years old. These cysts can form in healthy knees and generally do not bother the child or limit their activity. Some children feel a tightness or pressure behind their knee.

Diagnosis

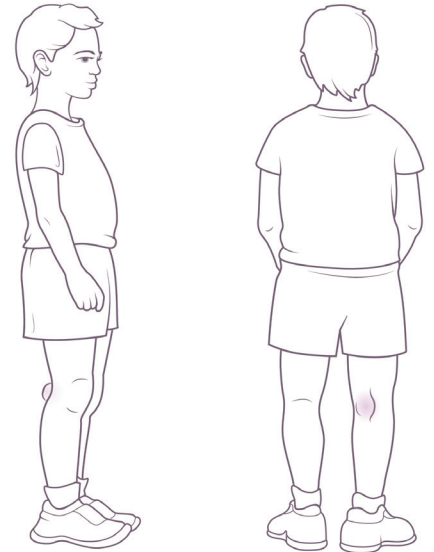
Your health care provider usually will diagnosis a Baker's cyst with physical examination. Imaging like x-rays, ultrasounds, MRI or CT scan is generally not necessary to diagnose a Baker's cyst.

Treatment

You may use a compression sleeve, ice or over-the-counter pain medication for any discomfort. You may continue to participate in all activities if comfortable.

When to Seek Further Treatment

Contact your health care provider if the Baker's cyst is still present in 1-2 years or if your child develops worsening pain, a large increase in cyst size, redness, fevers, pain in other joints or if they are not participating in their normal activities.



Cross section of knee showing normal anatomy and Baker's cyst

