

# Knee Noises: When It's Nothing and When It's Not

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Listen to your knees. They might be telling you something. Different sounds they make can mean different things.

## Why do Knees Make Noises?

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Doctors call knee noise crepitus and they sometimes sound like snaps, crackles, and pops. They can come from gas building up in areas surrounding the joints and forming bubbles. Bending the knee can cause the bubbles to burst and ligaments snap or pop.

Some noises are harmless, others are not.

## Knee Noises When Bending

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If the noises don't come along with pain, there usually isn't a reason to worry, says a doctor from UCLA's Sport's Medicine Program. The popping or cracking often happens when squatting or moving. It's a similar noise as cracking knuckles and mostly happens with rapid

movements.

That movement is what causes the gas bubbles to burst, making the noise. If a tendon or ligament flicks across the bone, it can also cause a popping sound.

## **When to Go to a Doctor**

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If pain comes along with the noise, it could be time to see a doctor. Grinding, rubbing, crunching, or crackling can mean bones are rubbing together because the cartilage is deteriorating, or the meniscus could be torn.

Swelling that comes with cracking could also be a sign of arthritis or another degenerative problem. A doctor might be able to diagnose a problem early, allowing for the most treatment options.

Patellofemoral pain syndrome, or runner's knee causes a dull ache behind the kneecap and sometimes causes a painful crunching and grating sound.

Also, if the sounds began after an injury to the knee, see a doctor if they don't go away after one to three days of RICE treatment, rest, ice, compression, and elevation.

## **Tips for Healthy Knees**

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If okay with your doctor, regular exercise can help quiet the knees by strengthening them. Make sure you warm up before exercising and stretch the muscles on the front and back of your thighs to better support the knee.

Wear shoes that support the knee and align the leg properly and stay at a healthy weight. Additional pounds will increase the stress on the knees.

If you're experiencing persistent knee pain or knee noises and you're concerned, connecting with a specialist is always a good idea. At Flexogenix, we specialize in cutting-edge, non-surgical treatment options, and can help you move past achy knees and into your best life. [Contact us](#) today to schedule your free consultation.