

OA Knee Bracing

Osteoarthritis (OA) commonly affects the knee joint. Factors increasing the risk of OA are general wear and tear over the years or prior ligament or meniscal injury. In knees, OA often affects one side of your knee joint more than the other. These regions are the medial or lateral (inside or outside) aspects of your knee. An uneven wear pattern in these regions can cause mal-alignment, which can then appear as bowlegged or knock-kneed deformities. Medial (inside) OA is most common. With localized one-sided OA, a knee brace may help reduce or eliminate the pain in your knee by relieving the pressure off the damaged joint surface and adding overall joint stability.

Factors effecting brace choice are:

- Activity level
- Leg shape
- Weight
- Severity of OA

To ensure a brace is appropriate the following is commonly reviewed and discussed prior to a brace selection.

- Referral or other reports such as a radiology report (standing X-ray report). This helps the clinician direct the choice of the appropriate brace more effectively.
- An exam of your knee alignment, range of motion and basic leg strength.

- History, symptoms, and activity level discussion.
- Observe you walk to see how your knee moves.
- Measurements or digital imaging to determine size. More specific measurements if a custom brace is chosen.
- Trialing of braces to determine what fits and functions best for you.

If you fit an “off the shelf” brace comfortably, and it provides you the ideal relief you can go home with that brace that day.

If you have a unique leg angle or shape, then a custom brace will be suggested, measured and made to your leg. Custom braces usually take between 7-10 days to fabricate. After you take any brace home, whether it be custom or off the shelf, there is always a chance an adjustment will be required. They are usually done “in-house” while you wait. Most custom braces also offer a lifetime warranty on the rigid frame parts.

OA knee pain is affecting more individuals in Canada and worldwide. Bracing is one conservative option that can help reduce or eliminate pain while helping to increase activity levels and improve overall quality of life.

Submitted by: Okaped Inc. • www.okaped.com



OA knee braces come in a variety of designs, styles and materials. Some designs have a rigid frame and an adjustable hinge to change the applied “push” pressure to offload the affected joint space. This more rigid brace style may be better for people who take part in multiple activities and who need different levels of support throughout their lifestyle. If you have any current or previous ligament instability, a rigid frame OA brace may be the better choice for you. Other brace designs offer a strap system to “pull” the weight off your effected joint space. These braces can come in a sleeve version or a flexible frame style and are often a single hinge design and are lighter and less bulky.



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Clinics in **Kelowna** are located on Ambrosi Rd and Pandosy St while in **West Kelowna** we help people on Westlake Rd.