

Anterior knee pain: a clinical comparison of rehabilitation methods.

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OBJECTIVE:

To compare different types of rehabilitation for anterior knee pain.

DESIGN:

Prospective, randomized, blinded, and controlled study of 64 participants with anterior knee pain.

SETTING:

Outpatient rehabilitation clinic and testing laboratory.

PARTICIPANTS:

Participants were assigned in randomized fashion to three rehabilitation groups: traditional home rehabilitation (n = 20); physical therapy (n = 21); and home rehabilitation with a modified vastus medialis obliquus (VMO) specific straight leg raise (Muncie method; n = 23).

INTERVENTIONS AND MAIN OUTCOME MEASURES:

Clinical data was obtained at 0, 2, 6, and 12 weeks. Cybex testing was performed at 0, 6, and 12 weeks.

RESULTS:

Clinical outcome for the Muncie method indicated a statistically significant improvement in subjective pain and functional impairment ratings. Cybex testing in patients using the Muncie method demonstrated a statistically significant improvement in pain-free isometric contractions and maximum voluntary contraction. There were no significant differences between traditional home therapy and physical therapy.

CONCLUSION:

Findings suggest that the Muncie method results in improved clinical outcome at a lower cost than traditional home and physical therapy and possibly improved VMO/quadriceps muscle balance. Patients with anterior knee pain may benefit from applying the Muncie method in a home therapy program.

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