

KNEE HEALTH FOR SWIMMERS

A quick guide for swimmers, families and coaches

“Swimmer’s knee” is a broad label, not a diagnosis. Notice what movements bring the pain on and tell someone you trust.



NOTICE THE PATTERN

- Where is the pain, and when does it start?
- Which stroke, kick, drill or dryland activity brings it on?
- Does it linger after swimming or affect walking, work, stairs or daily routines?



BREASTSTROKE & THE KNEE

- Inner-knee pain can be linked with breaststroke kicking.
- Knee pain can also occur with other strokes and activities.
- The sore spot alone cannot tell you the cause.



ADJUST THE SESSION

- Tell someone you trust and, if you have one, your coach. Younger swimmers should tell a parent or trusted adult too.
- Temporarily reduce the movements that clearly provoke pain.
- Keep comfortable swimming only if symptoms stay settled; stop or adjust if pain increases.



REVIEW THE LOAD

- Review recent breaststroke kick sets, swim training, dryland, other sports and competitions.
- Include rest and recovery in the conversation.
- For younger swimmers, growth and development can also be relevant. There is no single workload number for everyone.



BUILD BACK IN STEPS

- As symptoms settle, add comfortable swimming first.
- Gradually reintroduce harder work or breaststroke kick, ideally with your coach.
- If pain increases or lingers, step back and get advice.



GET HELP

- Arrange an assessment for recurring, worsening or limiting pain, limping or swelling.
- Seek urgent care if you cannot bear weight, have a hot, red or swollen knee with fever, have a major injury, or cannot straighten a locked knee.

A SIMPLE KNEE CHECK-IN

Use these prompts to explain what is happening to a parent, coach or clinician.

During swimming	After the session	The next morning

A comfortable, gradual plan helps swimmers stay active while their knee settles.

General information only. It does not replace an individual assessment or medical advice. | Evidence reviewed October 2026.