Left Knee Pain in Golfers? Try These Fast Fixes! Transcript

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Intro: Left Knee Pain in Golf

Have you ever hit a great drive? You watch it fly beautifully in the air, and then your left knee yells at you. We're done for today. And you're thinking, my swing felt fine, but why does my knee hate golf?

If that sounds like you, you are in The Right Place. I'm Dr. Guyen Pugendry. And for over the last 15 years, I have helped thousands of golfers get back to the game they love without having to resort to surgery.

Today, what we're going to be talking about is fast fixes for left knee pain in golf. These are simple things that you can start today with no pills required.

And yes, not a lecture I promise and for more tips on how to keep you golfing with less pain hit the subscribe button and tap like so that this video can reach other golfers that have cranky knees as well and also comment left knee if that's you so, that I know that you that i'm helping now in today's video we're going to be focusing on, how you move your swing, your muscles, you're warm up.

Why the Left Knee Hurts

Because I always say you can't address the root cause of your knee pain until we address your core. And I mean that literally. Your core muscles. Not your emotional core, though if golf is causing you existential pain too, well, maybe that's a different video.

In the next video after this one, I'll hit the fun stuff that people ask me a lot about. pills, muscle rubs, CBD braces, all of it. But today, I still really want to focus on movement.

Why does the left knee get mad? Let's talk about why the Left Knee is the one complaining. If you follow this channel, you have heard me say this before, but let me really paint the picture for the newcomers out there.

When you make a golf swing, your body is doing something remarkable and brutal at the same time. You're loading weight onto your back foot during the backswing, and then it's explosively shifting forward through impact.

All of that momentum, body weight, rotational speed, that force of impact, it all lands on your lead leg. In your right-handed golfers, this is your left knee.

Your left knee in that moment is doing three things simultaneously. All at the same time, it is bearing your weight. It is absorbing rotational torque or twisting force, and it's also stabilizing your entire finish.

You're basically doing a one-legged squat combined with a twist all at once. Now in a healthy 25 year old knee, fine, no problem. But for a knee that has a little bit of arthritis or an old meniscus tear, or it just has decades of rounds behind it, it can end up being a recipe for inflammation.

Here is the best part. This is a part that most golfers miss. The knee is often just the messenger. If you have tight hips, they can't rotate properly, so the knee has to compensate for that.

If you have weak gluteal muscles or your butt muscles and they can't absorb the shock, your knee has to absorb it instead. If your have stiff ankles, that changes how the force travels up your kinetic chain.

Post-Round Ice and Compression

Poor swing mechanics can amplify everything. Your knee is just the one that's yelling the loudest even though the problem may be somewhere else up street.

Okay. So let's start with what you can do right after a round if your knee is angry. If your left knee feels swollen or hot or puffy after 18 holes, here is your post round reset.

Step number one, grab some ice. Wrap some Ice or a cold pack and apply it on your leg for 15 to 20 minutes. Now don't put it directly on the skin. You need to have a thin layer of a towel or t-shirt or something like that in between the ice pack.

And your need and it'll work just fine. If you don't heed my warning, I had a patient who didn't listen to this advice and they took an ice pack straight from the freezer, put it on their knee, let it stay on there skin for 45 minutes.

And what ended up happening was when they take that icepack off, the top layer of skin came off with it and that wound took forever to heal. What the ice does is it helps reduce the inflammation and it signals your body that it is time to start recovering.

The second step is compression. A light knee sleeve or even on an elastic bandage wrapped tightly, you know those a strap things we talk about, they can help reduce swelling and give the joint a little bit of extra support.

Now I know what you're thinking. That's it. That is his advice. Medical school, residency, fellowship, and he's telling me to ice it and compress it? Well, yeah, because the number of golfers who skip this and then wonder why their knee still is swollen the next morning is huge.

This isn't glamorous advice, but it does work. Think of it as telling your knee, I hear you.

Simple Strength and Balance Exercises

We're winding down now. It's time for you to cool down. And it's cooling down the joint, not just the muscles. All right, so you want me to use my knowledge.

So here's where things can get a little bit more interesting. Remember when we were talking about that root cause, the core weakness? If your glutes and your quads are half asleep, your knee ends up having to work overtime.

Let's wake up the support team with three easy moves that you can do at home or you could do them on the course. Exercise number one is quad squeezes.

So remember, quads are those big muscles on the front of your thigh. What you're going to do is you are going sit or you going lay and keep your legs straight.

And what you gonna do, is your going tighten those muscles in front your thighs like you pushing the back of you knee down. We're trying to make it as straight as it's going get.

Hold that for five seconds and then relax. Do that ten to fifteen times. Exercise number two is glute bridges. I think you've heard me talk about these ones before.

Lie on your back with your knees bent, feet on the floor. Squeeze your butt and lift your hips into a small bridge. It's like you're trying to point your pelvis up towards the sky.

Hold this for three seconds, then lower slowly. Do that for 10 to 15 reps. And finally, single leg balance. Now this one, we're gonna start standing next to a wall or a chair because it can be tricky when you're first starting out.

Lift one foot off the ground and balance on the other one for 20 to 30 seconds. Then switch legs. If you hold your golf club while you are doing it, it becomes a golf specific balance drill that you can do in your living room.

Now one important note with these exercises, none of these should cause pain. Yes, you may get some mild discomfort or you might feel mild muscle fatigue or feel effort, absolutely.

But sharp pain, no way. What we're trying to do here is we are just trying switch your muscles on. We are not trying punish them. Now, here's my next tip.

And this one is a tongue twister. This is the front foot fix. Here is quick swing tweak that can help a lot of knees. Change your front foots. Most golfers set up with their front foot facing forward, try to say that four times really fast.

Front Foot Setup Fix

That means when you turn through the ball, your knee twists more. Try this instead. Turn your front, the left foot if you're a right-handed golfer, slightly open, a little bit towards your target, 20 to 30 degrees.

It's a very small change, but what it does is it lets your hip and your foot share in the twisting motion. Often it makes the finish of your swing feel smoother and it feels easier on the knee.

If you don't believe me, try this. At the range, hit five balls with your normal swing and you're normal stance. Notice how your knee feels. Now hit 5 balls, with that front foot facing slightly forward.

if your need likes the new setup, That's a free upgrade to your swing and you can thank me at the 19th hole. Now let's talk about the warm up or what most golfers call getting out of my car, moving my shoulders a little bit, walking around and then walk me to the first tee.

Your knee hates cold starts. When you go from sitting in a car to swinging a club with full force, your joint hasn't had a chance to produce something called synovial fluid.

Now, synovial just means joint, but that is the natural lubricant in your knee. What you're doing is you are essentially running your engine without oil for the first few holes.

So here is a quick two minute routine that can fix that.

Quick Warm-Up Routine

First off, start for 30 seconds by marching in place. This is just going to help get the blood moving. Number two, once you've done that, is you're gonna do 10 mini squats.

You're going to have your feet shoulder-width apart, your hips back, and like you are trying to sit into a tall chair. This is small, pain-free range of motion.

this is not a deep squat or deep bend. Number three is hip circles. you gonna to do ten of them in each direction. Your just gonna put your hands on your hip and you do gentle circles in a clockwise fashion and then counter-clockwise.

It's gonna help loosen your hits. Now you're going to take two to three practice swings with the front foot open. Just make slow, smooth swings and feel how that left knee behaves.

You can finish this faster than your buddy can probably finish signing on us to Facebook. The quick reality here is though, if your knee is locking or if it's giving out or it is blowing up with huge swelling, that is not normal golf soreness.

Those symptoms can mean that there's something structural that can be going wrong inside the knee. It could be a torn meniscus, it could a ligament that's injured, or it can something else that needs to have imaging and evaluation.

Please don't try to manage those types of things with ice and glute bridges. Go see a professional. Now, here is my standard disclaimer. Yes, I am a medical doctor, but I'm not your medical.

Not yet, anyway. This was meant to be educational. It was not intended to personal medical advice for your specific situation.

When Knee Pain Needs Evaluation

So today, we focused on movement fixes, ice, simple muscle activations, a stance tweak, and a quick warm-up. If this helped you understand your knee just a little bit better, hit like and subscribe.

Help me out, because in part two, i'm gonna be breaking down anti-inflammatory medications, muscle rubs, CBD cream, braces, maybe even some cortisone shots.

We'll talk about what's actually gonna help, what overhyped and how to use them safely. And if you want that, the only way to get it is to hit subscribe, to like, and tell me in the comments on a scale of one to 10, how bad is your left knee after a full round?

I'm Dr. Guyen Poovendrin and I hope to see you pain-free on the fairway.