Did the knee pain begin suddenly, with an injury, slip, fall, or collision? 

NO

GO TO FLOW CHART #2

ON CHRONIC KNEE PROBLEMS THAT DEVELOP OR WORSEN OVER TIME.

Did you hear a “pop” and does your knee feel unstable or wobbly? 

NO

Go to an orthopedic surgeon immediately, you may have torn your anterior cruciate, or other ligaments in the knee.

NO

Does your knee hurt as you bend it? 

NO

You may have damaged the articular cartilage on the bottom of the femur, top of the tibia, or inside the kneecap. There may be a small bone chip causing inflammation.

YES

Try anti-inflammatories, as directed on the bottle, for two days to reduce the chronic inflammation.

Restrict activity which causes pain. Call a specialist for a more in-depth diagnosis and treatment.

YES

You may have damaged a meniscus. If pain does not go away, this injury may require surgery.

NO

Does it hurt when walking or when you put weight on your knee? 

NO

Try anti-inflammatories to reduce the chronic inflammation. Also, use ice to reduce swelling.

The good news is that many knee injuries are simply strains from overuse. The three knee tendons at risk for pain are the patellar tendon, the quadriceps tendon, and the popliteus. Dancers, cyclists, and runners frequently experience bouts of tendinitis, when heavy usage stretches out their tendons. Neither requires surgery. When you return to activity, keep in mind that in sports like tennis, strains are often caused by poor footwork. Consider a tennis lesson with a pro who can improve your preparation and anticipation so there is less need for lunging and uncoordinated stops and starts.