

Chronic knee pain from a ganglion cyst compressing the superomedial genicular nerve

Approximately 25 percent of adults experience persistent knee discomfort, with osteoarthritis being the primary cause in individuals aged 50 and older. Medial knee pain can arise from various sources, including damage to the medial meniscus, saphenous nerve entrapment, or pes anserine bursitis. Generally, a Baker's cyst causes posterior knee pain and swelling/mass in the popliteal fossa which results from the expansion of the bursa located between the medial gastrocnemius and the semimembranosus tendon. These cysts often connect to the adjacent knee joint, particularly in older patients with knee pathology. The majority of popliteal cysts are typically discovered incidentally through advanced imaging, such as MRI, when clinicians are investigating other diagnoses. Compression of the genicular nerves should be considered in the differential diagnosis of patients with long standing knee pain. MRI may not be able to identify the course of the genicular nerves and emphasizes the importance of point of care ultrasound in the evaluation and treatment of musculoskeletal disorders.