



BAKER'S CYST

A Baker's cyst is a fluid-filled swelling behind the knee. The lump looks most obvious when the child is standing with their knee straight. A Baker's cyst may also be called a popliteal cyst or synovial cyst.

Baker's cysts occur more commonly in boys between 4–8 years old. They present as a painless lump behind the knee and usually affect only one leg. They are often not noticed by the child but observed by a parent

Baker's cysts are caused by an extra collection of fluid between the calf muscle and the knee joint in an area called a bursa. A bursa is a small pouch or sac of fluid found where tendons attach to bones. They help to cushion and reduce friction between tissues during movement.

Baker's cysts usually develop in children for no apparent reason and the child will usually have no symptoms. However, some children may report a feeling of tightness or pressure at the back of the knee joint especially when it is straight, or an aching in the knee after strenuous activity. The cysts often change in size from day to day.

A Baker's cyst is usually diagnosed by clinical examination. Shining a light through the cyst can also determine if the lump is filled with fluid so and an ultrasound scan can confirm the diagnosis when necessary. Other types of scan are rarely required.

Treatment of Baker's cysts in children is almost never required. The majority will disappear spontaneously, but the time in which they do so is variable. They will often get bigger before they finally resolve and there are no long-term problems to the knee.