

## KUNDALINI RISING

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## Know your knees

Ask any med student, and they will all agree that the knee is probably the most complex joint in the body. As a matter of fact most of the people who take up my course come with problems related to weak knees, or injury. Others suffer back aches that originate from their knees, although they do not even realise it.

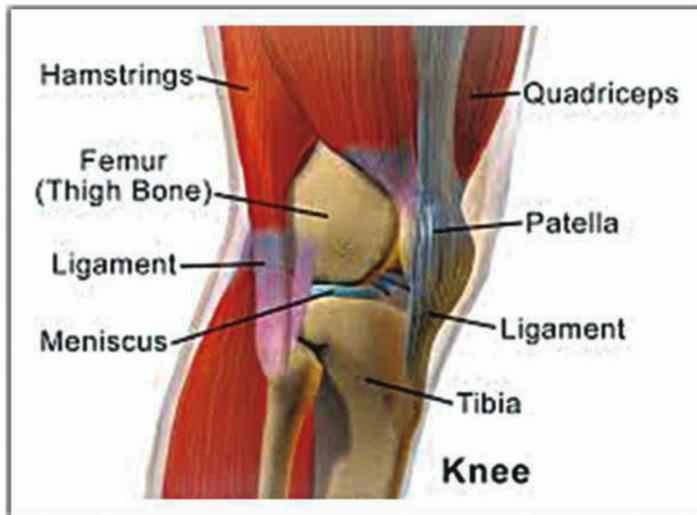
The knee joins the thigh bone (femur) to the shin bone (tibia). The smaller bone that runs along the tibia (fibula) and the kneecap (patella) are the other bones in the knee joint. Tendons connect the knee bones to the leg muscles that move the joint. Ligaments join the knee bones and create stability. Two C-shaped cartilages, the medial and lateral menisci, act as shock absorbers between the femur and the tibia.

People suffer from many sorts of knee injuries and knee conditions due to lack of strength in the muscles that hold the knee in place.

## KNEE CONDITIONS

Chondromalacia patella (irritation of the cartilage on the underside of the kneecap, the patella), knee osteoarthritis (caused by aging and wear and tear of cartilage), knee effusion (fluid buildup inside the knee usually from inflammation), meniscal tear (damage to a meniscus, the cartilage that cushions the knee, often occurs with twisting the knee), ACL (anterior cruciate ligament strain or tear often suffered during sports such as soccer or squash), PCL (posterior cruciate ligament strain or tear), MCL (medial collateral ligament strain or tear), patellar subluxation (sliding kneecap), patellar tendonitis (inflammation of the tendon connecting the kneecap to the shin bone, mostly suffered by athletes from repeated jumping), knee bursitis (pain and swelling from overuse or injury).

To help your knee stay healthy, glucosamine, cinnamon, and turmeric are great. Yoga and Pilates can stretch and strengthen the muscles around the knees to prevent



injuries and speed up recovery after injuries. Everyone, especially athletes, should do these knee exercises before and after exercise to prevent injuries.

Here is an easy and super-effective 5-minute routine to help you keep your knees healthy — Lie on your side, then move your legs up so they are at 45 degrees with your body. Rest your head in the palm of your hand, elbow on the ground. Keep your other hand on the ground in front of you for balance. Keep one hip stacked over the other and try not to move the hips back and forth. All movement should originate from below the hips, so you are isolating your leg muscles.

**Straight leg extensions**

Swing your top leg twice forward and once back, extending out of your hips as you do so. Keep the leg one foot above the ground throughout. Repeat ten times.

**Cycling**

Bend your knee and bring it up towards your chest, then reach forward and extend to straight leg and bring the leg all the way back. Again, bend the knee and repeat ten times. Like you are cycling

**Trace your leg**

Trace your bottom leg with your top leg, from bottom to top, then extend the top leg and reach out. Repeat ten times.

**Leg circles**

Keeping the top leg straight and extended out of hip socket, draw small circles with your heels (toes down) ten times. Reverse the direction of the circle and repeat ten times.

**Tap**

Tap the top leg in front of your bottom leg and then behind your bottom leg. Repeat ten times.

To watch the companion video, keep your eyes on Star Lifestyle's Facebook page or The Daily Star's Youtube channel.

Photo: Collected

## LS SPECIAL

## Where have all the lamps gone?

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They believe that the verse in the Quran that is claimed to have spoken about this holy night is taken out of context as that verse is actually about Shab-e-Qadr. It is also said that any references that are cited in the Quran or the Hadith are weak and their authenticity cannot be relied upon.

The one point that stands in the favour of this argument is that Shab-e-barat is not celebrated by Muslims in other nations with as much fervour as it is celebrated in our sub-continent, leading one to believe that its social and cultural significance outweigh its religious one.

Where many Islamic scholars vehemently oppose any kind of religious practice on Shab-e-barat like fasting or praying the entire night, there are some who are opposed to just the celebration of it. That is to say, they recommend adhering to the religious practices of fasting and praying during the night but are opposed to the festivities of firecrackers and lighting up houses and mosques. Even making halwa-roti is an unnecessary practice in their eyes.

Untouched by all this debate and controversy are the streets of Puran Dhaka that gear up to celebrate Shab-e-barat, although a little toned down than before, but still festive enough. The famous bakeries of old town dole out



delicious spreads of halwa and a variety of roti to sell throughout the day. The ambience in Chowk Bazar is definitely spirited.

Shab-e-barat may be just a cultural and social occasion, with little or no religious significance. But in a world constantly divided by strife, any reason for celebration that brings people together should be reason enough.

By Samina Hossain

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