

# Tired of Knee Pain?

*How an Unloader Brace Can Help You Stay in The Game*



## INTRODUCTION

If you're living with knee osteoarthritis, you know how frustrating it can be. That nagging pain can limit your daily activities, make walking difficult, and force you to put your favourite hobbies on hold.

Maybe you're not ready for a knee replacement or are looking to push back surgery as long as possible.

At Peach Physiotherapy & Wellness Centre, our goal is to help you find solutions that allow you to move with less pain and more freedom. One effective tool we use in our treatment plans is a custom unloader knee brace. But what exactly is it, and could it be the right solution for you?

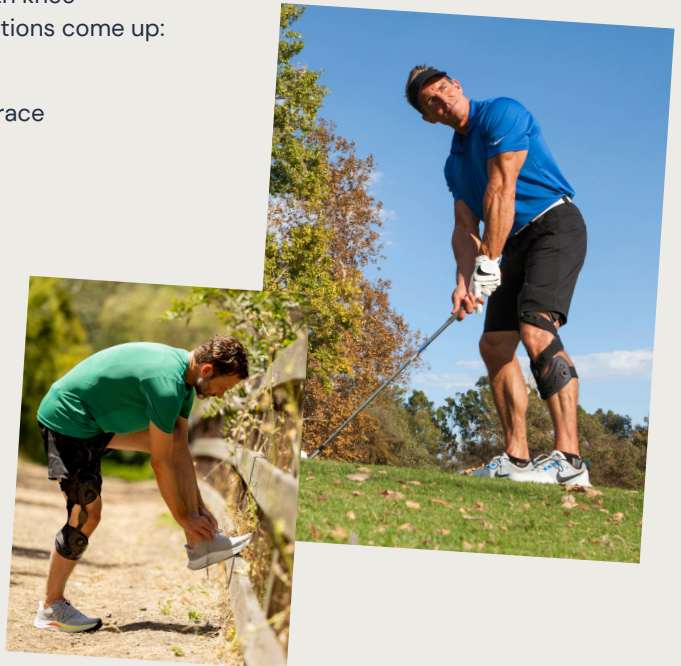
When we are recommending a knee brace for patients with knee osteoarthritis, two options come up:

- 1) An Unloader Brace
- 2) A Spring Loaded Brace

## WHAT IS AN UNLOADER BRACE AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

An unloader brace is a specialized knee brace designed to treat osteoarthritis that affects one side of your knee more than the other. Think of your knee as a bridge with two lanes of traffic. When one lane is congested and worn out, an unloader brace acts like a structural support to shift some of the traffic—or weight—to the healthy lane.

By gently applying pressure, the brace helps realign the knee joint and "offload" the painful, damaged compartment. This reduces stress on the joint, which can lead to significant pain relief and improved function.



# Unloader Braces

## IS AN UNLOADER BRACE A GOOD FIT FOR YOU?

Unloader braces aren't for everyone, but they are an excellent option for many people with knee osteoarthritis. You may be a good candidate if:

- You have mild to severe arthritis in just one side of your knee.
- Your knee has a bow-legged (varus) or knock-kneed (valgus) alignment.
- You want to delay or avoid surgery and are looking for an effective non-surgical treatment option.
- You are an active person who wants to continue walking, exercising, or playing sports with less pain.
- Your knee feels unstable or gives way when you walk.

The best way to know for sure is to have a thorough assessment by a professional who can determine if a brace will work for your unique knee alignment and pain.

## WHAT CAN AN UNLOADER BRACE DO FOR YOU?

Research consistently shows that patients who use unloader braces as part of their treatment plan often experience:

- *Significant Pain Reduction:* By taking pressure off the painful part of the joint, the brace can help you feel less pain during daily activities like walking and climbing stairs.
- *Improved Mobility and Function:* With less pain and more stability, you can move more confidently and perform tasks that were once difficult.
- *Increased Confidence:* The support from the brace can make your knee feel more stable, giving you the confidence to stay active and engaged in your life.

Being able to remain active is a key factor in managing osteoarthritis long-term. An unloader brace can be a powerful tool to help you stay on your feet and avoid a sedentary lifestyle.



# Another Option: The Spring Loaded Brace

## WHAT IS A **SPRING LOADED BRACE** AND IS IT A GOOD FIT FOR YOU?

Beyond traditional unloader braces, there are also specialized options for patients with more complex needs, such as tricompartmental osteoarthritis (OA) where multiple parts of the knee joint are affected.

The Spring Loaded Brace is a type of "tricompartmental unloader" brace that is designed to help patients who need support for more than one area of the knee. It uses a unique liquid spring technology to reduce muscle effort, which in turn reduces the forces transmitted through the knee joint.

- Patients most appropriate for a brace: This brace is particularly suited for individuals with tricompartmental OA, as it is designed to unload both the patellofemoral (kneecap) and tibiofemoral (thigh and shin bone) joints simultaneously.



## WHAT CAN A SPRING LOADED BRACE DO FOR YOU?

The spring loaded brace design has been thoroughly studied, with patients experiencing the following:

- *Pain and function improvements:* This brace is predicted to reduce knee joint loads by 30–50%, particularly during weight-bearing activities that involve knee flexion (bending) between 30 and 100 degrees, like lowering into a squat. This effect may be clinically beneficial for pain reduction or rehabilitation from common knee injuries.
- *Overall patient satisfaction:* Patient satisfaction with this brace is high, as it is designed with energy storage and bodyweight support to assist with movements like rising from a squat, which makes movement feel easier.

# Our Approach to Getting the Right Brace

At Peach Physiotherapy & Wellness Centre, we know that the key to a successful brace is a perfect fit. That's why we offer professional recommendations and fitting services. We will:

- *Assess Your Knee:* Our physiotherapists will perform a complete evaluation of your knee, including your alignment, range of motion, and pain levels, to determine if a brace is the right treatment for you.
- *Find the Right Solution:* If a brace is a good fit, we will recommend, fit, and distribute a custom brace that is specifically tailored to your body's needs.
- *Provide a Personalized Plan:* A brace is just one piece of the puzzle. We will combine its use with a personalized exercise program to strengthen your knee, improve your mobility, and help you get the most out of your brace and your recovery.

Don't let knee pain hold you back any longer. An unloader brace could be the solution you've been looking for to help you reclaim your active life.

**- Steven Peach PT**



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