

**DEFINITION**

1. A **bursa** is a closed, fluid-filled fibrous sac lined by synovium located at sites of friction between skin, ligaments, tendons, muscles and bones and facilitates movement between these structures. Inflammation of such a bursa is called bursitis.
2. Bursae may be -
  - 2.1. **anatomical bursae**, which are normally found at specific anatomical locations in the body and may be subcutaneous, subtendinous, submuscular or subfascial. Examples of anatomical bursae are subdeltoid, olecranon, trochanteric, semimembranosus and prepatellar bursae. Some bursae may be connected to each other and these are called intercommunicating bursae. Some communicate with the neighbouring joint and may be considered extensions of that joint. An example of this is the suprapatellar bursa.
  - 2.2. **adventitious bursae**, which develop - at points where an anatomical bursa was not previously present - in relation to an area of abnormal anatomy or in areas subject to repeated lateral displacement associated with pressure. Examples are bursae in relation to a bunion in hallux valgus or over an exostosis.
3. Bursitis may be **traumatic, infective** or **non-infective**. Each of these in turn may be acute or chronic.

**CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS**

4. A bursa usually presents as a painless swelling. When inflammation occurs – bursitis - there may be pain, usually reddening of the overlying skin and an increase in size of the bursa.

**TYPES & AETIOLOGY**

5. **Acute traumatic bursitis** is caused by direct injury to the bursa or by unaccustomed and excessive exercise. Examples are acute prepatellar bursitis and inflammation of the bursa anterior to the Achilles tendon.
6. **Chronic traumatic bursitis** (also called **irritative bursitis**) is caused by repeated pressure or injury. The majority of these are associated with specific occupations. Examples are prepatellar bursitis (housemaid's knee, carpet-layer's knee), olecranon bursitis (student's elbow, miner's elbow), subsartorial bursitis and semimembranosus bursitis. Chronic bursitis may become acute due to a new injury, infection or rupture.
7. **Acute infective bursitis** is caused by pyogenic bacteria, either directly from a skin wound or by spread from local cellulitis. The prepatellar and olecranon bursae are common examples.
8. **Chronic infective bursitis** is rare. An example is tuberculous bursitis of the trochanteric bursa.

9. **Non-infective bursitis** is usually associated with rheumatoid arthritis, gout and osteoarthritis. Common examples are subdeltoid bursitis and olecranon bursitis. A Baker's cyst of the knee is not a bursa but a herniation of the synovial membrane through a rupture in the capsule of the joint, usually associated with osteoarthritis.

## **CONCLUSION**

10. Bursitis is inflammation of a bursa. There are various forms of bursitis, each with its own aetiology and these have been listed above.

## **REFERENCES**

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