



The effect of a "bent-knee" gait on trabecular orientation: an experiment test of Wolff's Law

The Harvard community has made this article openly available. [Please share](#) how this access benefits you. Your story matters

Citation	Pontzer, Herman, Daniel E. Lieberman, E.N. Momin, Maureen J. Devlin, John D. Polk, Benedikt Hallgrímsson, David M.L. Cooper. 2005. The effect of a "bent-knee" gait on trabecular orientation: an experiment test of Wolff's Law. American Journal of Physical Anthropology 126(S40): 167.
Published Version	http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/ajpa.20217
Citable link	http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:2797428
Terms of Use	This article was downloaded from Harvard University's DASH repository, and is made available under the terms and conditions applicable to Other Posted Material, as set forth at http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:dash.current.terms-of-use#LAA

The effect of a "bent-knee" gait on trabecular orientation: an experiment test of Wolff's Law

Herman Pontzer, Daniel E. Lieberman, E.N. Momin, Maureen J. Devlin, John D. Polk, Benedikt Hallgrímsson, David M.L. Cooper

Abstract:

While recent attempts have been made to link trabecular orientation to gait and posture in extinct hominids, there have been few controlled experiments to test the hypothesis that there is a predictable functional relationship between the orientation of trabecular struts within a point and the orientation of loads applied to the joint. We tested the hypothesis (often termed Wolff's Law) by comparing the strut orientation in the spongiosa of the distal femur in two groups of immature guinea fowl that were exercised on treadmills (10 min/day, for 60 days) at 0° versus 20° inclines. Kinematic and force plate analysis found that, a peak ground reaction force, the posture of the knee in the parasagittal plane was approximately 16° more flexed in the 20° incline group. Strut orientation was analyzed from micro-CT scans of the joints using a radon transform analysis that quantifies the orientation of peak trabecular density (OPTD). As predicted by Wolff's Law, the OPTD was approximately 18° more flexed relative to the long axis of the femur in the incline versus horizontal birds ($p < 0.05$). These results demonstrate a predictable relationship between the orientations of trabecular struts and compressive loads applied to a joint during growth, supporting Wolff's Law. This technique may be useful for determining gait and posture in fossil species such as *Australopithecus afarensis*.