Sources close to Bahraini Jiu-Jitsu champion Mohammed Merza, who was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in what friends and family describe as a “fabricated” case, said that Bahraini authorities are refusing to provide Merza with knee surgery due to his detention.

"Merza has suffered pain since the first days of his detention in 2011," a source said. "After Jaw prison administrators stalled in taking him to the hospital, he was brought to see an orthopedic specialist at a Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) hospital six months ago, where he was diagnosed with severe knee friction, which requires surgery."

The source claimed that "the BDF doctor refused to approve the surgery, claiming it is only for ‘athletes’ and not political detainees like Merza.”

“The doctor is claiming that Merza is a political detainee and has no right to treatment, despite the pain he is suffering as a result of torture endured following his arrest and detention,” the source said.

Authorities claim that Merza is being adequately treated, as evidenced by a prescription he received for a special medication only available through private pharmacies. However, Merza’s family said that they have not been able to fill the prescription and bring it to him.