

Knee Injuries

Knee pain can be caused by many different things such as a sporting injury, twisting while you walk, overuse, or because of another health condition.

This guide is intended to accompany the advice given to you by your GP or physiotherapist. If your pain continues to get worse, contact them again for further advice and guidance.

Signs and symptoms

Knee injuries typically occur when a sudden change of direction occurs, such as twisting, turning, or kicking. They can also be caused by simply slipping on a wet surface or with general overuse. Symptoms include:

- Pain – either around, or deep within your knee where you can't point to where it is painful.
- Swelling and/or bruising.
- Loss of range of movement.
- Stiffness or something in the knee preventing complete straightening or bending.
- A feeling that your knee will give way, lock, or feel unstable.

You can find out more about knee injuries, including causes, symptoms and treatment suggestions, via the NJS website:

Visit NHS website www.nhs.uk/conditions/knee-pain/

Treatment

Follow the P.O.L.I.C.E approach in the first 48-72 hours.

- **P**rotection – rest the injured area. When ready, you can start gentle motion while protecting the area. You may need an assistive device, like crutches, to walk in the short term.
- **O**ptimal **L**oading - gentle progressive movements after an injury can promote optimal healing and prevent delays in returning to normal activity due to joint and muscle tightness or muscle wasting.
- **I**cing the area – wrap a bag of frozen peas in a damp towel and apply to the area for 15-20 minutes at a time, every 2-3 hours.
- **C**ompressing the area – with a simple elastic bandage or elasticated tubular bandage, which should be snug but not tight.
- **E**levate your foot whilst resting – ideally, at least the same level as your hip.

Exercises

Before exercising, please read the above for advice on what to do during the first 48-72 hours following a knee injury.

After 48-72 hours try to complete some gentle exercise to keep your joint moving. These can be performed with some pain, however, if too painful, reduce the number or frequency of the exercises, or stop and seek further advice.

These exercises can improve joint range and movement and strengthen the muscles around your knee and hip.

Start with **Group 1** and move on to **Group 2** as your strength improves and your pain settles.

Group 1

Active knee flexion



Standing, seated, or lying down with both legs straight. Bend one knee up as far as you can without using your arms and then straighten it out flat on the bed again. Repeat.

Freq: 3-6 x daily. **Duration:** 60-90secs. **Tempo:** Slow.

Stationary bike



Adjust the seat height so your knees are slightly bent while at the bottom of the cycle. The higher the seat, the less your knee will be asked to bend. The lower the seat, the more your knee will be asked to bend

Freq: little and often as able and comfortable.

Duration: 5-30 mins. **Tempo:** Comfortable.

Plantar flexion on two legs



Stand on both feet with your hands on a chair or table for balance. Raise on your tiptoes without bending the knees. Lower under control to come back to the starting position and repeat.

Freq: Twice daily **Reps:** 10-15. **Tempo:** Slow.

Partial squat



Stand on both feet, holding on to a chair or table for balance. Keep your back straight, and your hips above the level of your knees. Slowly lower your body into a squat position without leaning forward, keeping your heels grounded.

Freq: Twice daily **Reps:** 10-15. **Tempo:** Slow.

Group 2



Glute bridge

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Contract your buttocks to lift your hips off the ground until your trunk is aligned with your legs. Slowly return to the initial position and repeat.

Freq: Twice daily **Reps:** 10-15. **Tempo:** Slow.



Wall squat

Stand up against a wall with your feet in front of you (distance feet/wall: when your thighs are parallel to the ground your knees should be at 90 degrees). Slide up and down the wall, keeping your upper body in contact with the wall. Go down as low as comfortable or so that the floor is parallel with your thighs. Return to the start and repeat.

Freq: Twice daily **Reps:** 10-15. **Tempo:** Slow.



Single Leg Heel Raise

Stand on one foot, with your hands on a chair or table for balance. Raise the heel to go onto your toes without bending your knee. Lower to the starting position and repeat.

Freq: Twice daily **Reps:** 10-15. **Tempo:** Slow.

These exercise diagrams have been created by Wibbi.
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