

Trauma & Orthopaedics – Knee Replacement

Introduction

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides you with the information on how you are able to support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance has been written by clinicians who are responsible for your care.

Introduction

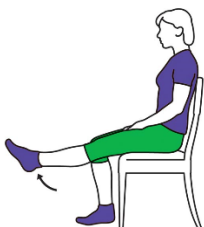
Waiting for your knee replacement

Our pain management resource includes advice to help you manage your ongoing pain. Prolonged waiting in pain can create worries about money, difficulties if you're a carer and can impact your mental health. Have a look at these links on this web platform for further advice and support if needed.

Versus Arthritis have produced useful information with regard to living with arthritis including changes you can make, and aids that you can use around the home that may help you better manage day to day tasks.

It is important to maintain movement and strength around your knee. You may have been given exercises to help previously and it is safe to continue these if you're able to. If not already doing so, the following exercises may help too. Start with those you find the easiest and then add a few more as you feel more confident. They may make your leg feel a bit tired and achy. If your pain and swelling increases, or keeps you awake and this lasts for a few days you may have done too much. If this happens take a couple of days rest, and then as you feel better gradually start again.

Straight-leg raise (sitting)



Sit back in your chair, with a straight back. Straighten and raise one of your legs. Hold for a slow count to 10, then slowly lower your leg. Repeat 10 times with each leg.

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Muscle stretch



Lie down on your back with a rolled-up towel under the ankle of your leg. Bend the other leg at the knee. Use the muscles of your straight leg to push the back of your knee firmly towards the bed or the floor. Hold for a slow count of five.

Repeat at least five times with each leg. This exercise helps to prevent your knee from becoming permanently bent. Try to do this at least once a day when lying down.

Leg stretch



Sit on the floor with your legs stretched out straight in front of you. Slowly bend one knee up towards your chest, sliding your foot along the floor, until you feel a stretch. Hold for five seconds. Straighten your leg as far as you can and hold this position for five seconds.

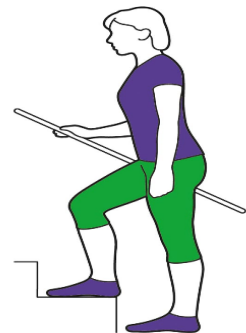
Repeat 10 times with each leg. If you can't get down onto the floor, sit on a sofa and use a board or tea tray as a surface to slide your foot along.

Straight-leg raise (lying)



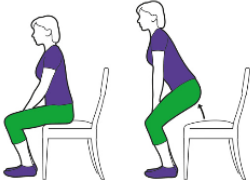
You can do this on the floor or lying in bed. Bend one leg at the knee. Hold your other leg straight and lift your foot just off the floor or bed. Hold for a slow count of five, then lower. Repeat five times with each leg every morning and evening.

Step ups



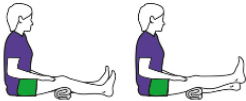
Step onto the bottom step of stairs with your right foot. Bring up your left foot, then step down with your right foot, followed by your left foot. Hold on to the bannister if necessary. Repeat with each leg until you can't do any more. Rest for one minute and then repeat this another two times. As you improve, use a higher step, or take two at a time.

Sit/stands



Sit on a chair. Without using your hands for support, stand up and then sit back down. Make sure each movement is slow and controlled. Repeat until you can't do any more. Rest for one minute then repeat another two times. If the chair is too low, start with rising from a cushion on the seat and remove when you don't need it anymore.

Quads exercise with roll



Sit on the floor, sofa or bed, with your legs stretched straight out in front of you. Put a rolled-up towel under one knee. Push down on the towel as if straightening your knee. Pull your toes and foot towards you, so that you feel your calf muscles stretch, and so that your heel lifts off the floor. Hold for 5 seconds, then relax for 5 seconds. Do this 10 times, then repeat the exercise with the other leg.

Being active is important for your overall physical and mental wellbeing. Whilst you may be limited by your knee, there is still a lot you can do. Take frequent short walks as you're able to and try and get out and about planning regular rest stops. If using a walking stick, use it in the opposite hand to the painful leg. You may find using two sticks easier. As with the suggested exercises above, a sign that you have done too much is if your pain and swelling increases, or keeps you awake and this lasts a few days. If this happens rest for a couple of days and then as you feel better gradually get going again.

The [Lets move with Leon](#) programme is also worth a look. It doesn't matter if you can't do some exercises because of your knee, any movement is good.

Many people with arthritis often find it easier to be active in the water. [Good Boost](#) run [water based exercise sessions](#) across the country and have experience supporting those with arthritis awaiting joint replacement operations

Maintaining a balanced diet and a healthy weight can also help. The Versus Arthritis [eating well with arthritis](#) information is worth a look. The NHS [lose weight](#) resource also has lots of support available including a free 12 week weight loss plan.

[Quitting smoking](#) is one of the best things you can do for your general health, and it will also help you recover better from your operations, so can [drinking less](#) alcohol.

What should I do if my knee is getting worse?

If your pain gets worse

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The contents of this information has been reviewed and approved by the Clinical Reference Group of ESNEFT.

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If you experience a significant increase in pain, swelling and/or decrease in walking distance which does not improve over a week please contact your GP practice.

If you notice greater deformity

If you feel your leg is becoming more bowed or knock kneed please contact your orthopaedic surgical team.

Where can I find additional information?

Some people find it useful to speak to others with arthritis and/or waiting for their operation. Both [Versus Arthritis](#) and [Arthritis Action](#) run local groups and offer a range of other support services.

[Versus Arthritis](#) also have a free Helpline (0800 5200 520) which can provide information and support on a wide range of topics related to arthritis; it is available from Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm.

Useful websites

Arthritis Action	www.arthritisaction.org.uk
NHS quitting smoking	www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/
NHS drink less	www.nhs.uk/better-health/drink-less/
NHS lose weight	www.nhs.uk/better-health/lose-weight/
Good Boost	www.goodboost.ai
Versus Arthritis	www.versusarthritis.org

Introduction

We do appreciate that having to wait longer for your operation or care is very concerning and would like to highlight a website which has been specially put together for everyone who is waiting for care. It covers all aspects of well-being and the support and help available to you <https://sneewellbeing.org.uk/>

We do have printed copies of this information available if this is easier for you to access. If you would like a copy please contact our PALS (patient advice and liaison team) and they will send you a copy. You can also contact PALS if you have any concerns. You can email them on pals@esneft.nhs.uk or telephone the team on Freephone 0800 328 7624.

- Take Your Medication
- Keep Moving
- Improve Your Health
- Good Mental Health