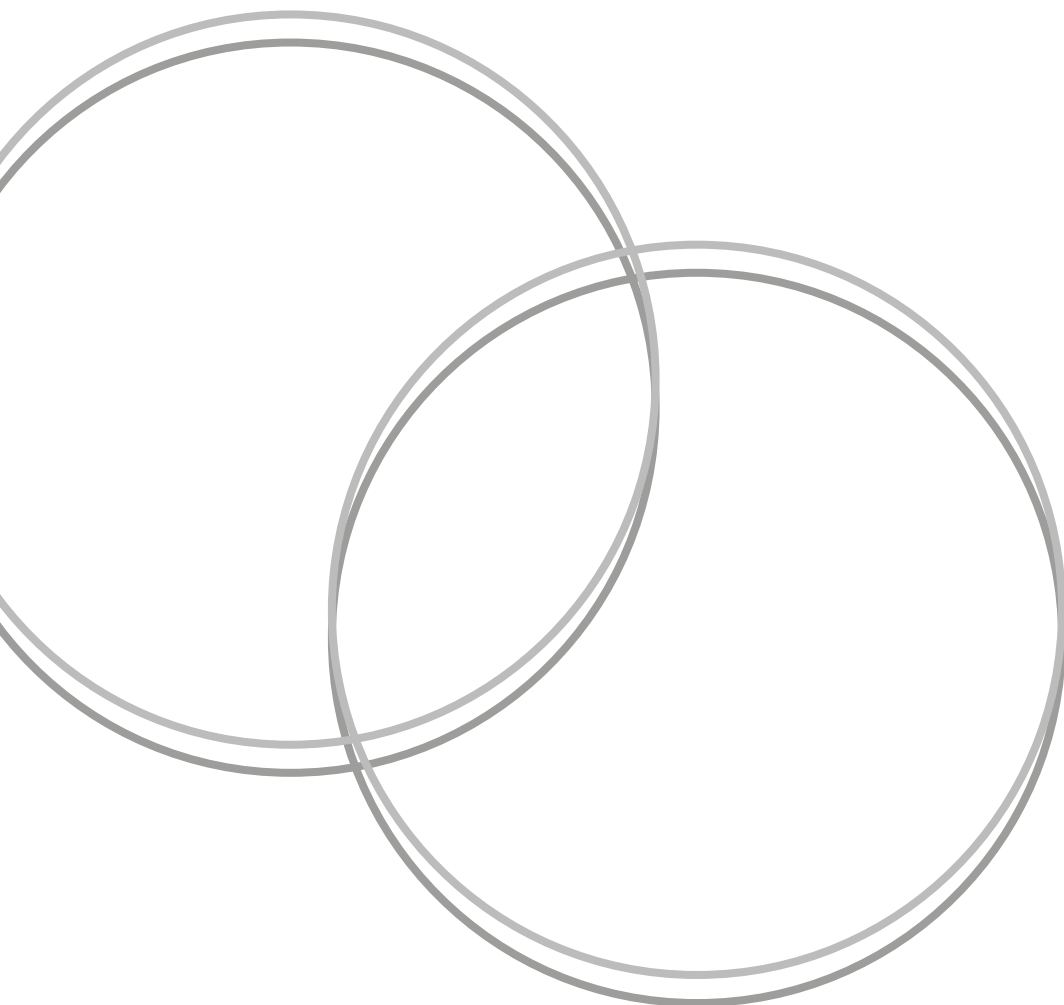


Knee Replacement (Day-case pathway)

**Physiotherapy from the day of
surgery until day 7**



You have been given this leaflet because you have just had knee replacement surgery and have recovered to an extent where your surgical team, nursing team and therapy teams are happy you can go home. Please be aware that recovery after a knee replacement is slow and gradual. Healing inside the knee takes 3 months or longer and it can be up to 2 years before the muscles around the knee return to a normal strength and you feel that you have fully recovered. This can be frustrating, especially if you want to return to an active job or hobby.

Activity at home

There is no specific restriction as to what you can do, but to optimise your recovery it is best to do very little for the first week. You will have been taught how to use crutches or a walking frame and you can take as much weight on your operated leg as is comfortable. It is recommended you walk around inside your home for short distances using your walking aid and only carry out very light activities. When resting elevate your leg on pillows and keep it straight.

Stairs

It is best to use the banister when using stairs. Hold the banister with one hand and a crutch in the other hand. You will need the spare crutch when you get upstairs so hold it horizontally in a 'T' shape against the handle of the crutch you are using. Remember to carry the spare crutch on the outside of the handle so that if you do drop it, it won't trip you up or hit your legs.

Sequence for going UP stairs

1. Stand close to the banister
2. Hold the banister rail with one hand
3. Step your unoperated (good) leg up onto the first stair
4. Bring your operated (bad) leg up beside it
5. Place your crutch up on the same stair as your feet

Sequence for going DOWN stairs

1. Stand close to the banister
2. Hold the banister rail with one hand
3. Put your crutch 1 stair down
4. Step your operated (bad) leg down onto the same stair as your crutch
5. Bring your un-operated (good) leg down beside it



Wound and dressings

You have a large bandage around your knee which must not be removed until we see you back in this hospital in 5-7 days. The bandage may feel tight due to the swelling in your knee, but this is normal after a knee replacement. The outside of the bandage should be dry or may have a small amount of blood showing. If it becomes very blood stained, or the leg becomes very swollen and painful, please ring 01865 741 155 and ask for the Operator. Tell the operator you have had a knee replacement in the last 7 days and you would like to speak to the Operational Manager at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre on bleep 7101.

Pain and using painkillers

It is normal for your knee to be very painful and swollen after knee replacement surgery. This will gradually lessen in the coming months. It is very important that you take your painkillers as directed and reduce them as pain settles. Some painkillers can make you constipated so make sure you keep hydrated and take the prescribed laxatives to help. Sometimes the pain medications can make you feel sick, so don't take them on an empty stomach and take the anti-sickness medicine prescribed or ask your pharmacist or GP for some if needed. All the prescribed medications will help with your recovery. Please make sure that you and/or your carer understand how and when to take them.

Swelling

Swelling around your knee is normal and may continue for over a year after your operation. Marked swelling may slow your recovery as it can stop your knee bending and your thigh muscles working effectively.

- The best way to reduce knee swelling is to elevate your whole leg
- For the first few weeks after surgery rest on your bed for 1 hour twice a day
- Raise your leg up on 2 or 3 pillows
- Keep your knee straight
- **DO NOT REST WITH YOUR KNEE BENT** as this makes it more likely to stiffen up and it may not fully straighten in the long term



Exercises

In the first days after a knee replacement, it is important to rest. We want you to do only 2 exercises for your knee. We will add more exercises at your hospital appointment in 5-7 days.

Exercise 1. Foot and Ankle Exercises

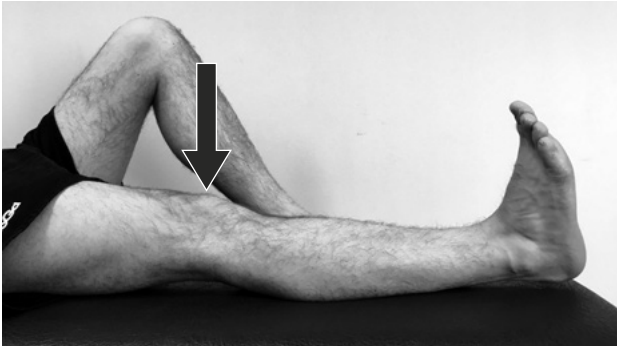
This exercise will improve the circulation in your legs while you are less active.



- Lie on your bed and move both feet up and down by pointing your toes and ankles towards you then away from you
- Repeat 10 times every hour
- You can also do this by alternating your feet so the right one is pointed down while the left one is pulled towards you then change direction.

Exercise 2. Static Quadriceps Contraction

Your quadriceps are the muscles at the front of your thigh. This exercise starts to get them working again gently after your operation.



- Sit or lie with your operated leg stretched straight out in front of you
- Tighten your thigh muscles by pulling your toes up towards you and pushing the back of your knee down into the bed
- Hold for 5 seconds and relax completely
- Aim to repeat 5 times and repeat 5 times a day or as comfortable

Physiotherapy

Continue the exercises in this booklet and walking around inside as you feel comfortable until you attend your follow-up appointment in 5-7 days.

Your next hospital visit

An appointment will be made for you to return to the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre 5-7 days after your operation to check that you are recovering as expected. You will be given this appointment either on the ward before discharge or you will receive an appointment by text message or phone. At this appointment you can ask any questions about your recovery and returning to your normal activities. You will have your wound checked and you will be seen by a physiotherapist who will give you advice and progress your rehabilitation with more exercises.

If necessary, you may be seen by other staff from the nursing or surgical team.

Early Ward Discharge Clinic Appointment

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Following this visit, if it appropriate, you may be given another physiotherapy appointment at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre to progress your exercises further.

If you notice any ooze coming through your dressing or have any concerns about your wound in the first 7 days, please ring **01865 741 155** and ask for The Operator. Tell the operator you have had a knee replacement in the last 7 days and would like to speak to the Operational Manager at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre on **bleep 7101**.

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

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Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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