

KNEE PAIN

Knee pain is very common, but can usually be treated at home and normally starts to feel better in a few days. It might be a good idea to contact your GP or pharmacist, who can give you advice on your recovery, especially if you can't put any weight on your knee.

Make an appointment to see your doctor if:

- the pain lasts for more than a few weeks
- your knee locks or gives way
- the pain is really bad.

When the pain is under control, you can start to do some gentle exercises to keep your knee moving and build your strength back up. It's important to get the right balance between rest and exercise, but resting for too long could mean your recovery takes longer. As well as the exercises on this sheet, walking can be helpful for your knees. Try to go out most days, and gradually increase the distance you walk. If you have an exercise bike or pedals at home, you can try cycling for a few minutes, gradually increasing your time and adding resistance as you recover.

Exercises

Many people find the following exercises helpful. If you need to, adjust the position so that it's comfortable. Try to do these exercises regularly.

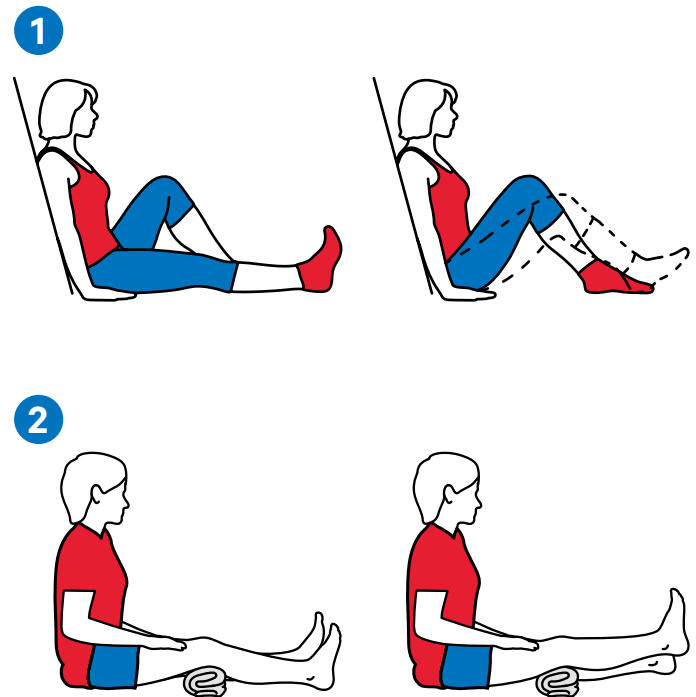
Do each one a few times to start with, to get used to them, and gradually increase how much you do.

1. 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 gentle stretch. Hold for five seconds. Straighten your leg as far as you can and hold in 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.

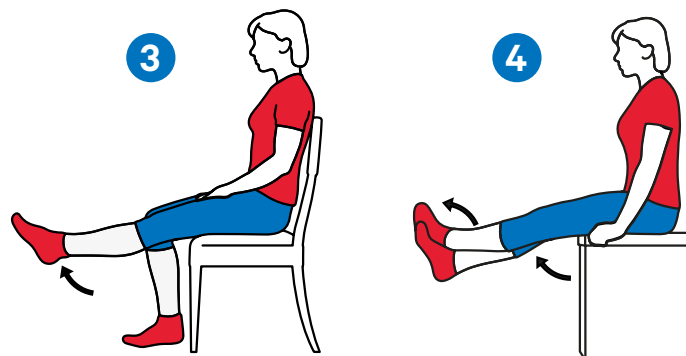
2. Quads exercise with roll

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.



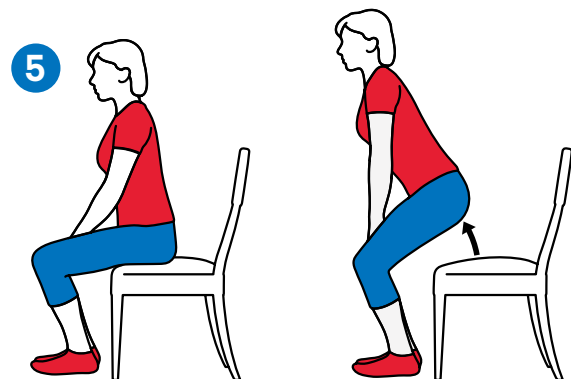
3. Straight-leg raise

Sit with good posture in a chair. Straighten one of your legs, until you feel a stretch in the back of the leg. Hold for a slow count to 10 and then slowly lower your leg. Repeat 10 times with each leg. If you find this easy, straighten and raise one leg, before holding for a count of 10. Try to get into the habit of doing this exercise every time you sit down.



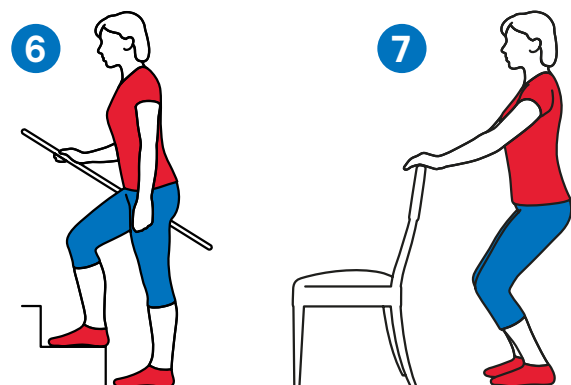
4. Leg cross

Sit on the edge of a table, seat or bed and cross your ankles. Push your front leg backwards and back leg forwards against each other, until your thigh muscles become tense. Hold this for as long as you can, then relax. Rest for one minute and then repeat another two times. Switch legs and repeat.



5. 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 as many times as you like. Rest for one minute, then repeat another couple of times. If the chair is too low, start by putting a cushion on the seat and remove when you don't need it anymore.



6. 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 you need to. Repeat with each leg until you can't do any more. Rest for one minute, then repeat this another couple of times. As you improve, use a higher step.

7. Knee squats

Hold onto a chair or work surface for support. Squat down until your kneecap is directly over your big toe. Hold for a count of 5, then return to your normal standing position. Repeat as many times as you like, rest for one minute, then repeat another couple of times. As you improve, try to squat a little further, but don't bend your knees beyond a right angle.

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