

# Exercises following a Total Knee Replacement

Information and advice for patients

## Physiotherapy Department

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In order to get the best out of your total knee replacement it is important that you follow the advice and exercise programme given by your physiotherapist. A member of the physiotherapy team will help you with your exercises and mobility but it is your responsibility to continue with them independently while in hospital and at home.

### What are the benefits of the exercises?

These exercises will help you improve and maintain good muscle strength and movement. They will help reduce pain after your operation and reduce post-operative complications. The amount of benefit you get from the exercises will depend on how much effort you put in. In order to get the best result from your total knee replacement you will need to be committed to doing your exercises.

### What are the risks of the exercises?

There are no risks to performing the exercises but you may feel slight discomfort in your knee whilst performing them; this is normal.

### What are the risks of not doing the exercises?

If you do not perform the exercises regularly, you may experience stiffness and loss of movement in your knee. You may also not see any improvement in your knee pain or function after the operation.

### Are there any alternatives to these exercises?

There are no alternatives to these exercises that will help you maintain good muscle strength, movement and help you regain function in your operated knee.

### How to perform the exercises

Try to repeat each exercise 10 times every hour for the first 2 weeks and then 3 times a day for following 6 weeks.

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### Ankle movement

When sitting or lying down move your ankles regularly to improve your circulation.



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### Static quadriceps

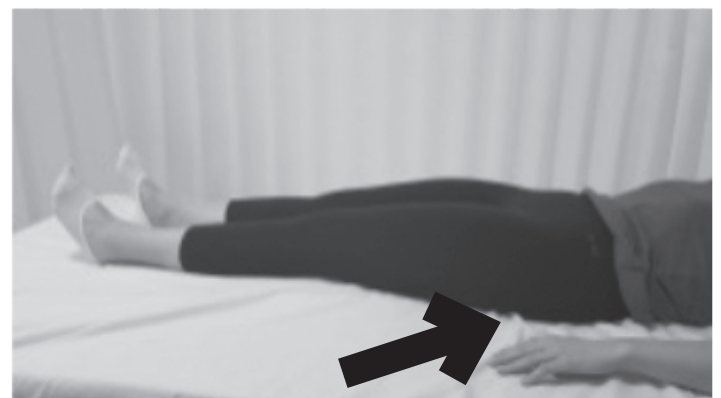
1. Sit or lie with your operated leg straight.
2. Brace your knee (keep it straight and in position) and tighten your thigh muscle.
3. Hold this for 5-10 seconds.
4. Relax.



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### Static gluteals

1. Sitting or lying, squeeze your buttocks.
2. Hold this for 5-10 seconds
3. Relax.



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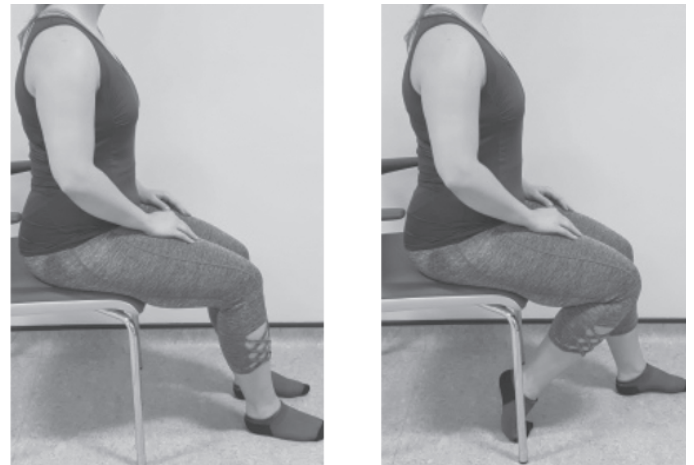
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### Knee Flexion

1. Sit on a chair.
2. Bend your knee back until you feel a stretch.
3. Hold for 5-10 seconds.
4. Relax.



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### Stairs Advice

**Going upstairs** – good leg, operated leg, stick.

**Going downstairs** – stick, operated leg, good leg.

### Follow-up

You will be given an outpatient physiotherapy appointment, you must attend this appointment.

### Symptoms to report

You should expect some swelling, pain and bruising for some weeks after your operation.

Taking pain relief, using ice packs as advised and continuing exercises will help. Go and see your GP if your knee or leg becomes very swollen, red or if your pain is severe.

### Additional information

You will see your consultant at 6 weeks.

TED stockings should be worn for the following 6 weeks.

Do not rest with a pillow under your knee; this will prevent you achieving a straight leg.

Gradually increase the distance you walk once home.

### Contact details

If you have any questions or concerns about these exercises please contact the orthopaedic physiotherapist by telephoning the hospital switchboard and asking the operator to bleep them on bleep 6702.

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### Further Information

For more information about our hospitals and services please see our website [www.swbh.nhs.uk](http://www.swbh.nhs.uk), follow us on Twitter @SWBHnhs and like us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/SWBHnhs](http://www.facebook.com/SWBHnhs).

### Sources used in this leaflet

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- Artz, N., Elvers, K. T., Et al. (2015). Effectiveness of physiotherapy exercise following total knee replacement: systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC musculoskeletal disorders*, 16, 15. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12891-015-0469-6>
- NHS Website (2019) Knee Replacement Available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/knee-replacement/> [Accessed 17 November 2020]
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