



PHYSIOTHERAPY DEPARTMENT

Managing Acute Knee Injuries



Acute Knee Pain

Most knee injuries happen when the knee twists or bends awkwardly. This can overstretch or strain some of the soft tissues around the knee. If you sustain a knee injury, follow the advice offered by your physiotherapist. Follow the **R.I.C.E** regimen below



Rest: Limit your walking for the first **3 days** after injury but then progress walking indoors and outdoors. Use crutches or a walking stick as you have been advised

Ice: Apply ice to the injured area at least **4 times per day for 15 minutes** to reduce pain and swelling (use an ice pack or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel). Leave 2 hours between applications.

Compression: Wear the elastic bandage provided to help reduce swelling. Please **take it off** going to bed or If your toes become cold or you develop pins and needles in your foot

Elevation: To reduce swelling, elevate your ankle so that it is **above hip level**. You can also place pillows under your foot when in bed at night.

Walking/ Crutches: If advised to weight bear on the injured ankle restore your normal heel-toe walking pattern as soon as possible. Continue with crutches until advised otherwise by your physiotherapist. If you are using only one crutch it is important that you use it on the opposite side to your injured ankle

Exercises

It is important to keep your knee **moving**. Resting your knee for too long can actually prolong your pain and disability. Here are a few exercises you should start doing early on

Exercise 1.

Bend and straighten your knee as far as possible. This exercise can be done while lying or sitting. Repeat 10 times.



Exercise 2.

Rest on a couch with your knee straight. Push the back of the knee down into the couch as firmly as you can tensing the thigh muscles. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.



Exercise 3.

Place a pillow or cushion under your knee while resting on a bed or couch. Straighten your knee. Keep the back of the knee resting on the pillow. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.



Exercise 4.

Rest on a couch with your knee straight. Lift your heel off the bed while keeping your knee locked straight. Only lift a few inches off the bed. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.



Exercise 5 (stretches)

1. Stand with the leg to be stretched behind you. Toes forward, heels on the ground. Bend the front knee. Keep the back knee straight. Hold for 20 seconds. Repeat 3 times.

2. Standing in front of a wall, place your toes against the skirting board, keep the heel on the ground and bring your knee to the wall. Hold for 20 seconds. Repeat 3 times.

1.



2.



Exercise 6 (Balance)

Holding onto something stable for support, try to stand on your affected leg and maintain your balance. Repeat 5 times.

