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Knee arthroscopy

Introduction

Following your knee arthroscopy, with or without cartilage removal it can take between three and eight weeks before your knee is back to normal. However, you will not need to be off work or inactive for this entire period.

This booklet is designed as a reminder to the advice that your doctor and physiotherapist has given you.

Standing and walking

You need to rest for the next two or three days with your leg elevated as much as possible to prevent swelling. You may mobilise freely around the house but long walks or standing for long periods of time should be avoided.

When walking although your knee may feel uncomfortable you must try and walk normally, i.e. heel and toe.

When standing for any length of time periodically brace your knee to help the muscles regain their strength.

Stairs

At first it may be too painful to do the stairs correctly. If this is the case, then do them one step at a time. Step up with the good leg first and down with the bad leg first.

Work

Return to work when you knee feels comfortable and you feel confident that your knee will be able to withstand the stresses of your job.

If you have a sedentary job you should be able to return within 7 days. If your job is more physical and involves climbing, squatting or lots of stairs delay your return to work for at least 2 weeks.

Driving

Do not drive until you are able to bend and straighten your knee fully without pain and are able to do an emergency stop. You need to check with your insurance company whether you need permission from a doctor first. If this is the case speak to your GP or wait until your follow up clinic appointment.

Swelling

Your knee may swell for a couple of weeks or longer after your operation. If this swelling is excessive, rest with your leg elevated and apply ice packs if you wish.

The ice pack should always be wrapped in a damp towel or tea towel and never placed directly onto the skin. It should only be applied for a maximum of 20 minutes as any longer than this can make the swelling worse. The ice pack can be applied several times during the day but there should be at

least an hours rest between each application.

Exercises

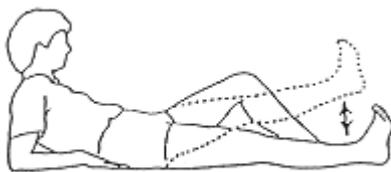
It is essential that you practice the following exercises for at least the next four weeks. Each exercise needs to be repeated 10 times and the whole regime 3-5 times daily. You may continue these exercises longer than the suggested 4 weeks until your knee feels as strong as the good knee.

1. Static quads



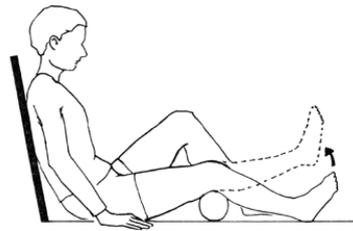
Sit with your leg straight out in front of you. Tense your thigh muscles (quads), pushing the knee down into the bed. Pulling your toes towards you may help to make this exercise easier. Hold for a count of 5. Repeat 10 times.

2. Straight leg raise



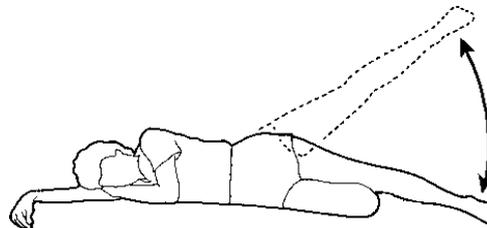
Sit with your legs out in front of you and your back supported. Brace your knee and lift your leg two inches, holding it for 10 seconds. Lower your leg slowly. Repeat 10 times.

3. Inner range quads



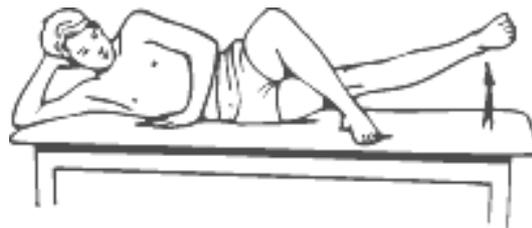
With the leg resting over a rolled up towel lift the foot off the bed until the knee is straight. Hold for 10 seconds, lower the leg slowly. Repeat 10 times.

4. Hip abduction in side lying



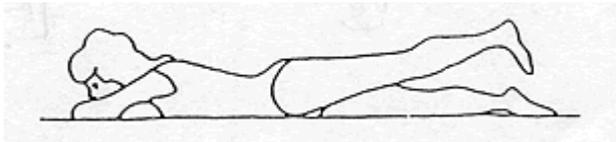
Lie on your un-operated side. Brace your operated leg and lift it up sideways. Hold for 10 seconds. Lower your leg slowly. Repeat 10 times.

5. Hip adduction in side lying



Lie on the operated side with the other leg bent up in front of you. Brace your affected leg and lift it up. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat 10 times.

6. Hip extension in lying



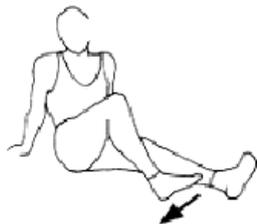
Lie on your stomach. Brace your operated knee and lift your leg up behind you. Hold for 10 seconds then slowly lower your leg. Repeat 10 times.

7. Balancing on one leg

Stand on your operated leg with your knees together. Raise your other leg behind you and balance in the same position for 30 seconds. Repeat 5 times.

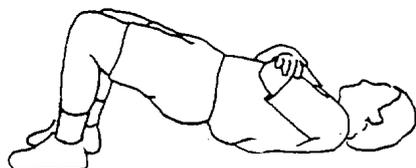


8. Heel digs



In sitting bend the operated leg up as far as is comfortable. Pull your heel down into the bed until you feel the muscles tighten in the back of your thigh. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times. Repeat the exercise, increasing the bend in your knee until it is at a right angle (90degrees).

9. Bridging



Lay on your back with your arms across your chest. Tuck your pelvis under and lift your bottom up and off the floor, pushing through your legs and not arching your back. Hold for a count of 5 and relax back down slowly. Repeat 10 times.

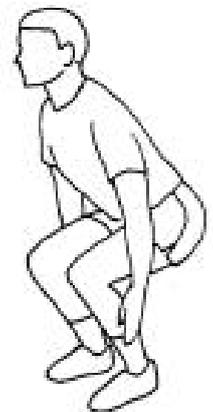
10. One legged bridging



When you can do exercise 8 easily you can progress to single leg bridging. Raise your other leg up until it is parallel to the floor, using your affected leg to lift up your bottom while keeping your back straight.

11. Half squat

Stand tall and, keeping your bottom tucked in and your back straight, bend your knees slightly. Slowly straighten back to standing tall again. Repeat 10 times.



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