

# Soft tissue injury of the knee

## Fracture care team [Patient information](#)

This is a follow-up to your recent phone call with the fracture care team. Your case has been reviewed by an orthopaedic consultant (bone specialist) and fracture care physiotherapist.

### You have a soft tissue injury (sprain) to your knee.

**Healing:** This injury will take 6-12 weeks to heal.

**Pain and swelling:** Your knee may be swollen. Resting and raising the leg will help. Take pain killers as prescribed.

**Using your leg:** You may walk on your leg as comfort allows with or without crutches. You may have been fitted with a brace in the Emergency Department. Wear this as you feel comfortable, and if you feel it helps you walk. You can remove it at night if you want to. You can choose to wear it if you feel it helps you sleep better. You should not wear the brace for longer than four weeks.

**Follow up:** We do not normally follow up these injuries. If you are not progressing as expected, or your physiotherapist is concerned, we would be happy to review you in fracture clinic.

You may be referred to a physio following discussion on the phone.

### Area of your injury



If you are worried about following this rehabilitation plan, please contact us for advice.

If you are experiencing pain other than at the site of the injury or surrounding area, please get in touch. Contact details are at the bottom of this leaflet.

# Please follow the management plan below

## What to expect:

Weeks since injury	Rehabilitation plan
0-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Wear the brace if fitted by the Emergency Department, as needed.</li><li>✓ You may remove it for personal hygiene and to apply a cold pack.</li><li>✓ You must move the knee within your range of comfort.</li><li>✓ The brace can be worn under or over your clothes, whichever is most comfortable.</li><li>✓ You are allowed to put weight through the leg, with or without crutches, as comfortable.</li></ul>
4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ You may remove the brace completely and continue with physiotherapy.</li></ul>
6-12	<b>If you are still having significant pain and stiffness, then please contact us for further advice.</b>

## Advice for a new injury:

### Cold packs:

A cold pack (ice pack or frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel) can provide short term pain relief and reduce swelling. Apply this to the sore area for up to 15 minutes. Do this every few hours. Make sure the ice is never in direct contact with the skin.

### Rest and elevation:

Try to rest the knee for the first 24-72 hours. This will let the early stage of healing begin. Raise your knee above the level of your hips to reduce swelling. You can use pillows or a stool to keep your foot up.

### Early movement and exercise:

Early movement of the ankle and foot is important to promote circulation. This reduces the risk of getting a DVT (blood clot). Follow the exercises below without causing too much pain. This will stop your knee from becoming stiff. These exercises will help the healing process.

Early weight bearing (putting weight through your injured leg) helps healing. Try to walk as normally as possible as this will help with your recovery.

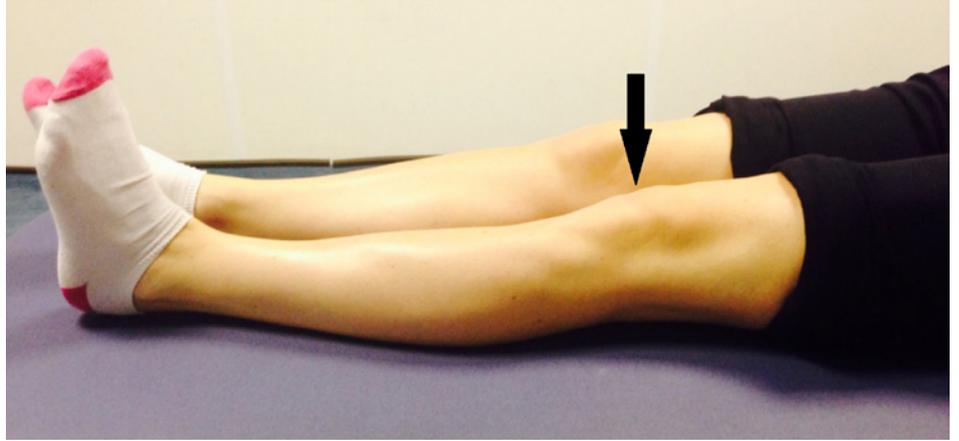
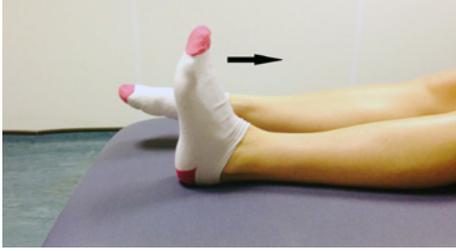
## Return to driving

You may return to driving when you are able to fully control the vehicle. This includes being able to safely do an emergency stop. You must not drive in the brace you have been given. It may take a few weeks before you feel safe. This varies from person to person.

# Exercises

**These exercises can be started immediately.**

**Initial exercise to do 3-4 times a day. You may remove the brace to do the exercises if you feel comfortable to.**



1. Point your foot up and down. Repeat 10 times.
2. With the leg straight and supported, gently tense your thigh muscle and try to straighten your knee further. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat 10 times.



### 3. Active straight leg raise

Lying on your back with your leg straight and the other leg bent.

Exercise your straight leg by pulling the toes up and lifting the leg 20 cm off the bed. Keep your knee straight throughout. Hold for about five secs and then slowly relax.

Repeat 10 - 15 times.



### 4. Inner range quads

Lying on your back, bend your good knee and place a cushion or towel under your affected knee.

Exercise your straight leg by pulling your foot and toes up, tightening your thigh muscle and straightening the knee (keep knee in contact with the cushion).

Your foot should lift off the bed/floor. Hold for about five secs and then slowly relax.

Repeat 10 - 15 times.

### 5. Heel slides

Lying on your back on your bed, the bed sheets act as a sliding surface.

Bend and straighten your hip and knee by sliding your foot up and down the bed sheets. If you are not wearing the brace, you can bend the knee as far as you feel is comfortable.

You can also use your hands if needed to help gently bend the knee.

Repeat times 10 - 15 times.



## Contact details

Please contact **0300 019 2802**

(Answer machine monitored Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm)

Or e-mail: **uhd.fracturecare@nhs.net**

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