KNEE PAIN AND ARTHRITIS

Simple knee exercises

Keeping your knee moving really helps. It can ease pain and stiffness, and build the strength you need for everyday life. You can do these at home, with no special equipment.

Before you start

- Start with one or two exercises, 2 or 3 times each, on both legs. Add more gradually.
- Have you had recent knee surgery, or been given exercises? Follow that advice first.
- Your knee may feel a little more sore at first. This should get easier with regular practice.
- Clear some space and exercise only if you feel well enough. Stop if you feel unwell.

Lying on your bed



1. Knee bend

Slide one foot towards you as far as is comfortable, then straighten.

Hold 2 seconds



2. Thigh squeeze

Tighten your thigh and gently push the back of your knee into the bed.

Hold 5 to 10 seconds



3. Knee over a roll

With a rolled towel under your knee, push down and straighten, lifting your heel.

Hold 5 to 10 seconds



4. Lying leg raise

Bend one knee. Slowly lift the other straight leg just off the bed, then lower.

Hold 5 seconds

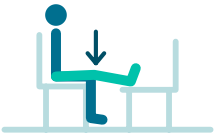
In a chair and on the stairs



5. Seated leg raise

Sit back with a straight back. Straighten one leg, raise it, then slowly lower it.

Hold for a slow count of 10



6. Seated knee stretch

Rest your foot on a chair opposite. Gently push your knee down to straighten it.

Hold up to 10 seconds



7. Sit to stand

Stand up and sit back down, without using your hands if you can. Low chair? Add a cushion.

Slow and controlled



8. Step ups

Step onto the bottom stair, bring your other foot up, then step down. Hold the bannister if needed.

Lead with each leg in turn

Please turn over for how to build up, how much pain is OK and when to get help

How much and how often

1. **Start small.** 2 or 3 repetitions at a time, little and often, such as every hour.
2. **Build up.** As it gets easier, and if you feel able, add 1 or 2 repetitions every few days.
3. **Move to sets.** 8 repetitions, a minute's rest, then 8 more, 2 or 3 times a day.
4. **Your goal.** Over time, work up slowly to a maximum of 2 sets of 15 repetitions.

Stretch (exercise 6): when a short hold feels fine, build up to 20 to 30 seconds. Gentle, not sore.

How much pain is OK?

Rate your pain out of 10 as you exercise, and aim to stay between 0 and 5.

0 to 3	4 to 5	6 to 10
Minimal: carry on	Acceptable	Too much: do fewer, go slower or rest for longer

Your muscles may ache briefly as they get used to new movements. This should ease quickly, and your pain should be no worse the next morning. **Stop if the exercises make your symptoms worse or cause new pain.**

Other things that can help

Stay active
Keep up daily life and work if you can. Any activity beats none.

In a flare-up
For 1 to 2 days, do less but keep moving. Rest with your leg raised.

On the stairs
Good leg first going up, sore leg first coming down. Use the rail.

Heat or ice
In a towel, up to 20 minutes, a few hours apart. Not with poor circulation or feeling.

Pain relief
Painkillers can help you keep moving. Ask your pharmacist or GP.

Free online classes
Arthritis UK runs gentle movement sessions, with seated options.

Phone NHS 24 on 111 if

- You had a bad fall or direct blow to the knee in the last 7 days
- Your knee looks misshapen after a new injury
- You can't put any weight through your leg
- Your knee swells straight away after a twist
- You have a very high temperature, feel hot and shivery, and your knee is red or hot

Contact us if

- Your knee locks or gives way
- Your knee is hot, swollen or tender, especially if you can't recall an injury
- Your knee pain is getting worse
- Your knee is no better after 6 weeks of following this advice

If we are closed, phone **NHS 24 on 111**.

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Phone / WhatsApp: **+44 7857 761328**
care@ourgp.co.uk
ourgp.co.uk

Out of hours: **NHS 24 on 111**
Arthritis UK: arthritis-uk.org
Helpline: 0800 5200 520

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