

Knee Pain: Exercise Sheet



Doing aerobic activity (e.g. brisk walking and swimming) are good for your health and joints. If you have knee pain then some simple exercises focussed on increasing movement and strengthening can help you carry out your programme more successfully. Begin by working the muscles before moving on to the strengthening exercises.

Progress slowly with adequate rest between your sessions. It is not unusual to get some discomfort during exercise but if you have too much pain then you have done too much, too quickly. Resume activity gently and slowly once the pain settles.

Simple Exercises to begin working the muscles



- Sit on the floor with legs outstretched. Slowly bend your knee as far as you can without hurting; hold for a few seconds before straightening your knee by sliding your foot along the floor. Repeat this 5-10 times.



- To begin working your thigh muscles put a cushion under your knee. Push down on the towel with your knee and lift your heel off the ground; hold for a few seconds and slowly relax. Repeat this 5-10 times.



- Knee movement can be improved by doing cycling on a static bike without resistance. Adjust the seat height so that there is a slight bend in your knee when the pedal is at its lowest point. Do it for a few minutes at a comfortable pace and increase this as you improve.

Muscle strengthening

Strengthening exercises whilst sitting should be done before starting the weight bearing (i.e. standing) ones.



- Sit on a chair and slowly straighten your knee. Hold this position for 5 seconds and slowly relax your leg. To make this harder, place one leg behind the other and push the back leg against the front leg which should not move. Repeat this several times for both legs.



- Sit with your hands on your shoulders. Stand up and then slowly sit down on the chair. The exercise can be made easier or more difficult by changing the height of the chair. Do not let your knees turn in or out. Try to do more as you feel comfortable and strong.



- Stand in front of a table or chair and hold on with both hands for support. Slowly crouch down keeping your back straight and heels on the floor. Crouch down to a comfortable position and then straighten back up. As you feel stronger, you can squat a little further.



- Place one foot on a step or the bottom step of your stairs and by using the banister as support step up and down with the other leg. Repeat on both sides. Increase the number of steps you do as you feel stronger.