

Knee Injury Advice

You may have injured your knee by damaging either the ligaments (sprain) or the muscles or tendons (strain). This will cause pain, swelling, stiffness and a limp. The following advice should help you to recover.

Things you should do	Things you should not do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest for the first 24/48 hours after your injury • Keep your knee raised (elevated) with your foot higher than your bottom to help prevent/reduce the swelling • Use ice packs (frozen peas wrapped in a towel will do), for 15 -20 minutes every 2 hours if you can during the day for the first 48-72 hours following the injury. • Take the recommended medication to relieve the pain – this can be bought over the counter from a pharmacy or local shops. Follow the instructions on the packet/bottle • Move your knee gently 4-6 times a day, once most of the swelling has gone down. If the movements hurt, try to make them smaller • If you are not getting better after 1 week go to your GP or return to the ED/MIU department where you were seen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use ice packs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ over areas of skin that are in poor condition ○ if you have poor sensation to cold ○ if you know you have poor circulation. • Place ice packs directly onto your skin as they can burn. • Do not leave ice on while asleep • Wear any support bandage in bed • Stand still for long periods

Please remember - For the first 72 hours after a sprain or strain, you should avoid:

- **Heat** - such as hot baths, or heat packs,
- **Alcohol** - this will increase bleeding and swelling, and decreases healing,
- **Running** - or any other exercise that could cause more damage, and
- **Massage** - which may increase bleeding and swelling.
- **Driving** - as this will aggravate the pain and/or swelling because of the pressure on the pedals and is also unsafe as you may be unable to brake suddenly in an emergency.

What should I take for Pain?

No pain relief may be needed if the sprain is mild. However painkillers, such as **Paracetamol**, are useful to ease pain, but it is best to take them regularly for a few days or so rather than every now and then.

They can be bought over the counter from a pharmacy or local shops. Make sure you do not take any other product containing Paracetamol.

With all medication it is essential that you follow the instructions on the packet or bottle carefully.

Anti-inflammatory painkillers can also be used. These relieve pain and may also limit inflammation and swelling, however if you are pregnant or trying to get pregnant you should not use them.

Side effects sometimes occur with anti-inflammatory painkillers - stomach pain and bleeding from the stomach, are the most serious. Some people with asthma, high blood pressure, kidney failure or heart failure may not be able to take them either.


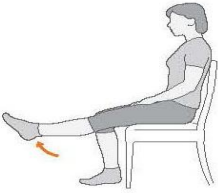
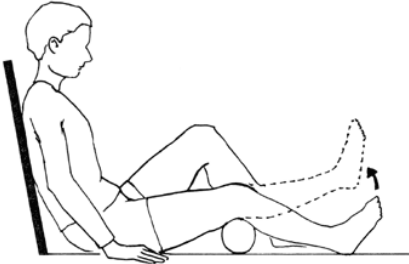

You can buy Ibuprofen at pharmacies both in tablet and gel form. There is less risk of side-effects with the gel, however, the amount of the drug that gets into the bloodstream is much less than with tablets and it is important that you use enough gel.

What Exercises can I do?

The following exercises can help to get you moving normally, and safely, if you have a muscle or joint problem affecting your knee.

How many and how often?

Start by doing 10 repetitions of each exercise, 3-4 times a day. Add an extra 1 or 2 repetitions every few days as long as you feel comfortable. If these exercises make your symptoms worse, or cause new pain, try to make the movement smaller - if this does not help then stop.

	<p>Straight Leg Raising (Lying)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• With your injured knee straight, and the other knee bent, pull your toes towards you and lift up your sore leg by (at least) 1 centimetre or more off the floor. You should aim to get it off the floor by about 15cms/ 6ins• Hold for 5 seconds and lower gently to the ground. Repeat 10 times.
	<p>Straight Leg Raising (seated)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• With both feet on the ground, lift and straighten your injured knee as far as is comfortable• Hold this position for 5 seconds before returning your leg to the floor• Repeat 10times.
	<p>Wedge and Weight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sit with a rolled up towel under your sore knee.• Push your knee down on the towel and raise the heel off the bed.• Straighten the knee as far as possible• Hold for 5 seconds then lower leg slowly.• Repeat 10 times.
	<p>Lying knee hold</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lie on your back, pull your toes towards you and push the back of your sore knee firmly down against the floor or bed• Hold for 5 seconds then relax• Repeat 10 times.

Remember

Stop these exercises if they make your symptoms worse, or cause new pain.

	<p>Lying knee bend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With both knees straight, slowly bend your sore knee by sliding your foot along the floor or bed towards you as far as is comfortable • Hold for 5 seconds then lower leg slowly. Repeat 10 times.
	<p>Seated knee bend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit on a firm chair with your feet touching the floor. • Gently pull your foot back underneath the chair, as far as you can. • Hold for 5 seconds then relax. • Repeat 10 times.
	<p>Knee squats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold onto a chair or work surface for support. • Squat down until your kneecap covers your big toe. • Return to standing. • Repeat at least 10 times.
 <p>Hamstring stretch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lie on your back with a cushion under your head. • Pull your knee onto your stomach helping with your hands. • Push your other leg down towards the floor. Hold for 20 seconds - relax. • Repeat 5 times.
	<p>Alternative Hamstring stretch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit at the edge of a chair or bed • Straighten your affected leg out in front of you and rest your heel on the floor or a small stool. • Sit up straight, then gently bend forward at the hips until you feel a gentle stretch on the back of your leg. Hold for 20 seconds - relax. • Repeat 5 times.

If you are concerned about your progress, or if you have not improved within 10 days, we advise you to contact your GP or return to the Emergency Department/MIU department where you were seen.

If you are at all concerned about your injury please contact the relevant Emergency Department or Minor Injury Unit (MIU):

Royal Gwent Hospital (RGH): 01633 234056

Nevill Hall Hospital (NHH): 01873 732073

Grange University Hospital (GUH): 01633 493287

Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr (YYF) MIU 01443 802353

Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan (YAB) MIU: 01495 363318

References:

<https://cks.nice.org.uk/sprains-and-strains#!scenario>

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/muscle-bone-and-joints/exercises/exercises-for-knee-problems#introduction>

**“This document is available in Welsh /
Mae’r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg”.**