

## Knee arthroscopy

This is general advice about caring for your knee after an arthroscopy. It does not replace specific medical advice about your condition and how best to care for it.

### Managing your pain

During your arthroscopy, at least two small cuts were made on either side of your kneecap to allow a tiny camera and instruments into your knee joint.

Local anaesthetic has been injected around the cuts and into the knee to minimise discomfort after the procedure. The numbing effect last between 5 and 12 hours. When it wears off, your knee may be uncomfortable. Pain relief tablets work best when your pain is starting, so it's best to take them early rather than waiting for the pain to worsen.

Unless you have been advised something different, take paracetamol first. You will have been prescribed stronger pain tablets take you can also take if needed. If you have been prescribed Panadeine Forte®, note that this contains paracetamol, so you cannot take this and other medications containing paracetamol such as Panadol®, Panamax® or Panadol Osteo® at the same time.

### Looking after your dressings

The cuts on your knee have been closed with clear dissolvable stitches under the skin. These do not need to be removed. Over the cuts, white tape and waterproof adhesive dressings have been placed. You can shower with these dressings as long as the seal remains intact. Before you go home, the staff will give you replacement adhesive dressings, which you can use if the seal is broken. If you do need to change the dressings, don't take off the white tape underneath.

A bandage will also be on your knee. Leave this on for 24 hours to help keep the swelling down.

## Controlling swelling

It is normal for there to be some swelling for 2–4 weeks after knee arthroscopy. For the first 3 days after your surgery, keep your leg elevated as much as possible and take things easy.

Try to ice your knee as much as possible for the first week. Keep ice applied for 20 minutes at a time, with at least 20 minutes rest between icings.

## Using crutches

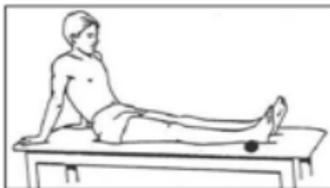
Unless you have been advised otherwise, you can bear full weight on your knee and crutches are for comfort only. Crutches are only needed for a few days, if at all.

## Post-op exercises

To get the best results after surgery, perform the following exercise 3–4 times each day.

### Knee Lock

Put a rolled towel under your heel. Tighten your thigh muscle (quadriceps) and push the back of your knee into the bed. Hold this for 5 seconds, then relax. Repeat 20 times.



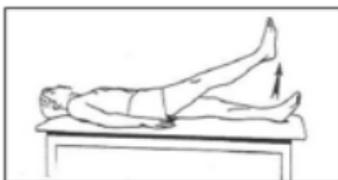
### Knee Bend

Slide your heel up the bed towards your bottom as far as you can comfortably. Hold this position for 5 seconds then straighten your knee. Repeat 10 times.



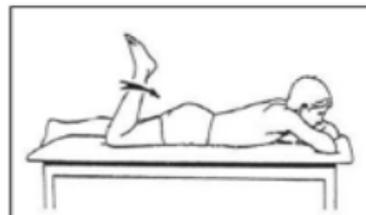
### Straight Leg Raise

Lie flat on a bed. Lock your knee out straight and lift your leg 30cm off the bed and hold for 5 seconds then relax. Repeat 10 times.



### Reverse Knee Bend

Begin this exercise 3 days after your surgery. Lie on your stomach and bend your knee back as far as is comfortable. Hold this for 5 seconds then straighten your knee. Repeat 10 times.



## Returning to activities

The timings given here are general. They may differ depending on your knee condition.

Activity	When you can expect to be able to do the activity
Return to work	Sedentary job 1–2 weeks Manual job 2–4 weeks
Driving	5–7 days
Exercise bike	1–2 weeks
Swimming	2–4 weeks
Gym	2–4 weeks
Sport	3–8 weeks