

Knee arthroscopy surgery

Introduction

A knee arthroscopy is a day case procedure which involves the insertion of a camera into the knee through two or more small incisions (often referred to as a 'keyhole surgery'). This is usually completed under a general anaesthetic. This allows your surgeon to further examine the cartilage, ligaments and other structures in your knee. During the operation, if a defect is identified, the surgeon may treat it at the same time. This will be discussed with you prior to and following your surgery.

Guidance for Patients

Exercise

We would recommend undertaking some exercises to help prepare for your surgery. Here are some examples:

Ankle pump

1. Lie down or sit on a chair with your feet flat on the floor
2. Lift your toes upwards, keeping your heel on the floor
3. Repeat 10 times x 3 times a day

Static glute contraction

1. Start by lying on your back
2. Squeeze your buttocks together firmly
3. Hold for 6 seconds and relax
4. Repeat 10 times x 3 times a day

Knee Hang

1. Start sitting up on the floor with your back against a wall
2. Place a rolled-up towel underneath your ankle on your affected leg
3. Allow your knee to fully straighten
4. Rest your leg in this position
5. Repeat

Heel slide

1. Start sitting up on the floor with your back against a wall and your legs out in front of you
2. Slide your heel towards your bottom, bending your knees, as far as you are able to
3. Carefully straighten your leg again
4. Repeat 10 times x 3 times a day

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Static quad contraction

1. Start by lying down or sat up on a firm mattress
2. Tighten the muscles on the top of your affected leg
3. Hold it for 6 seconds and relax
4. Repeat 10 times x 3 times a day

Lifestyle changes:

We would encourage anyone waiting for surgery to lose some weight if necessary and to stop smoking. Both these measures are known to lower risk of complications following surgery. Visit our [While You Wait website](#) for information and advice.

Mental health support:

It's important during this time to take care of your mind as well as your body. You might be feeling down, worried or anxious while you wait for your surgery. Remember it's okay to feel like this, these are normal reactions. There are a range of services available to help you manage during this time. Take a look at our [mental health support page](#) for more information.

Pain Management:

You can take pain relief such as Paracetamol, Anti-inflammatory creams, Codeine, Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. If you need any advice, your local pharmacy will be able to help.

There are a number of resources to help you manage your pain:

- [10 ways to ease pain](#)
- The Chartered Institute of Physiotherapy has produced helpful [guidance for managing pain and improving your quality of life](#)

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

The information on this page is designed to help you manage your symptoms and stay in the best possible health while you wait. It is however possible that some of your symptoms may get worse while you are waiting for your surgery. There are some things to look out for that would indicate you should seek medical help:

1. If your pain gets worse to the point that it is unmanageable with the pain relief suggested by the pharmacist or doctor and you are struggling to cope with it;
2. If your mobility gets worse to the point you are off your feet or unable to work;
3. If your knee suddenly deteriorates

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If you do experience any of these issues we would recommend getting in touch with your hospital team. The number and email should be on your last hospital appointment letter.

Alternatively, you can contact your GP practice. Whilst your GP does not have access to the hospital waiting list to get you seen sooner, if your condition is getting worse they can assess you, give advice and can contact the hospital on your behalf if necessary.

If your condition gets worse but you already have your date for surgery, we recommend getting in touch with your hospital team. The number and email for this should be on the hospital appointment letter.

Links to more information

[NHS England advice on managing knee pain](#)

[Versus Arthritis advice on managing knee pain](#)

[NHS England information on arthroscopy surgery](#)