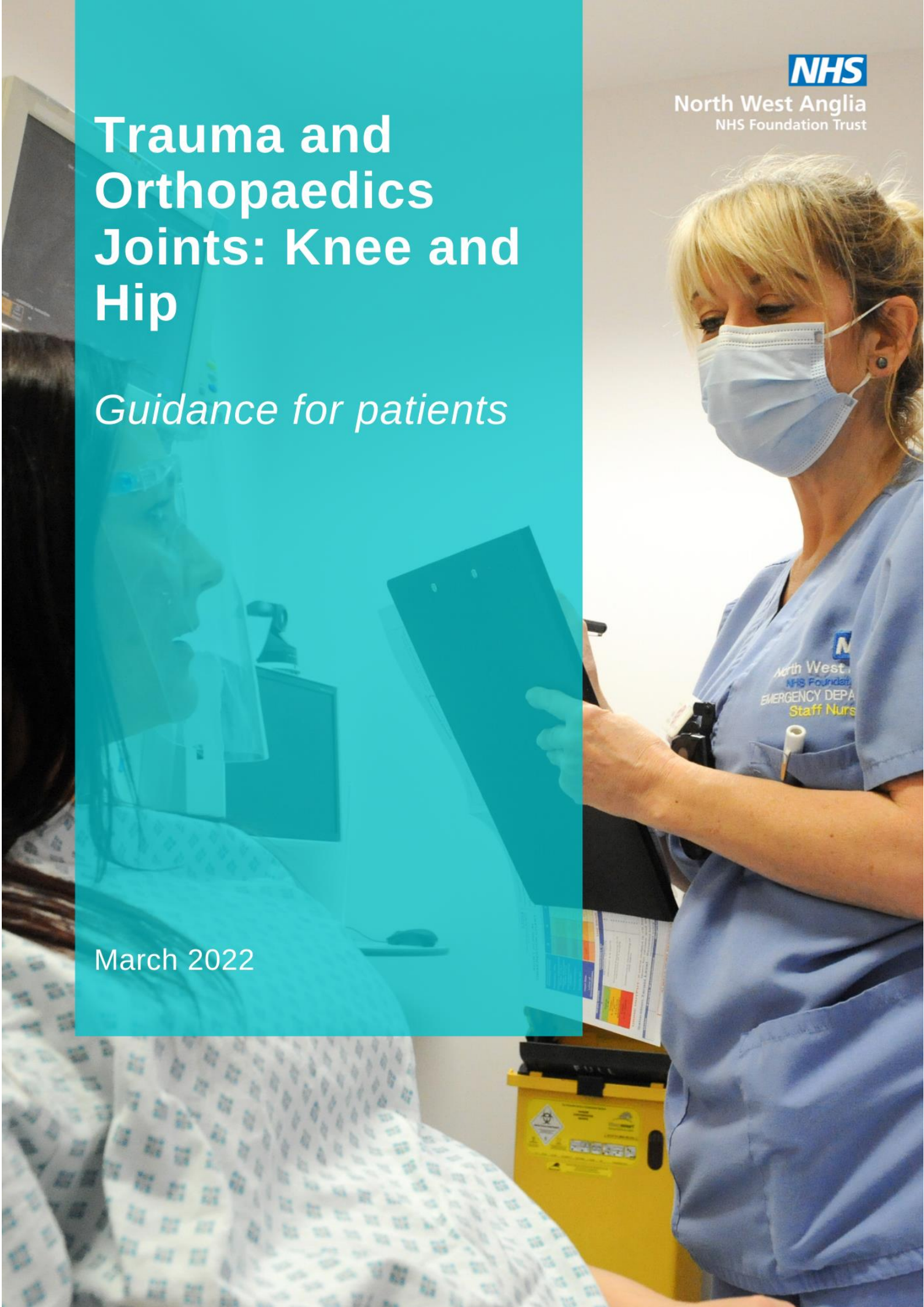


# Trauma and Orthopaedics Joints: Knee and Hip

*Guidance for patients*

March 2022



## Trauma and Orthopaedics Joints: Knee and Hip

### Introduction

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides you with information on how you can support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance has been reviewed by clinicians who are responsible for your care.

### Guidance for Patients

It is important that while you are waiting for your surgery you remain as active and as medically fit as possible. If you have any long-standing conditions such as high blood pressure you should get this reviewed at your GP surgery to make sure it remains well controlled. This will also help prevent any unnecessary delays when you come for your pre-operative assessment. Maintaining a well-balanced diet is also important, as is reducing any excessive weight that may be impacting on your general health. If you are a current smoker, it would be advisable to seek support to help with stopping, advice can be found at your local pharmacy or GP surgery.

We here in the Orthopaedic Department at NWAngliaFT want to help you manage your osteoarthritis during these challenging times, when the delays to normal elective surgery, mean you are not getting your surgery as quickly as we would like. There are some very useful websites that can help you to manage some of the symptoms you are experiencing and guidance regarding help and support that you may be able to access.

**Age UK** - <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/conditions-illnesses/arthritis/>

Age UK provides information on activities and exercise class held by local Age UK representatives. They also signpost to advice on healthy eating options and maintaining a healthy weight especially important if you are being considered for surgery, and some of the options available to get help in the home (<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/care/arranging-care/homecare/>)

**Versus Arthritis** - <https://www.versusarthritis.org/>

Versus Arthritis is an arthritis charity, especially geared towards helping individuals manage differing forms of arthritis. They have useful online exercise programmes especially designed for those with painful arthritic conditions that will help maintain flexibility. They also offer self-help tips for managing arthritic pain.

**NHS Website living with arthritis** - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/arthritis/living-with/>

This website carries useful information for those still at work and dealing with the impact of arthritis and useful links to financial and local government websites that may be able to offer you further support in your home.

## Healthy eating and being active

Information and advice on healthy eating and becoming more active is available from:

- One You Eat Better (website) - includes Easy Meals app for healthy meals and the Change4Life Food Scanner to help reduce levels of sugar in your diet.
- Better Health -Get Active (website) - includes tips on getting active for all, including the downloadable Active 10 app, as well as tailored advice for those living with a long-term condition

## Find out your BMI

You can get help to lead a healthier lifestyle. If it's too high, sign up for a programme that will help you lose weight.

The NHS 12-week fitness plan will support your weight loss plan as well as improve your health. This is aimed at beginners and will help get you into the habit of regular exercise over the course of the programme. It is structured but flexible enough to allow you to fit the exercise sessions around your other weekly commitments

## What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

### Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it's not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening –severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains –please dial 999.

Go straight to hospital if:

- the knee / hip pain was caused by a serious fall or accident
- your leg is deformed, badly bruised or bleeding
- you're unable to move your knee / hip or bear any weight on your leg following injury.
- you have knee / hip pain with a temperature and feel unwell

## GP surgeries are still open

If you experience an increase in pain, inability to weight bear on this limb or a significant reduction in mobility, you should in the first instance contact your General Practitioner for review and advice.

GP surgeries are still open and are working differently to how they did before the COVID-19 pandemic. GP practices continue to make best use of telephone, online and video consultations. Face-to-face appointments are still being given to those who need it.

When you phone or use an online form to contact your GP surgery to make an appointment, you will be asked some questions which are designed to help staff guide you to the most appropriate

clinical person to help you with your condition. This could be a nurse, clinical pharmacist, physician's associate, GP, or paramedic.

Before you see your GP, it may be worth thinking of the questions that you could be asked to help make a diagnosis and decide how quickly you need treatment. Some standard questions are as follows:

- Where do you feel the pain?
- When and how did the pain start?
- Does anything make the pain worse?
- Does anything make the pain better?
- Can you walk and bear weight on it?
- Do you have any other medical problems?
- Do you take any medicines?

### **Managing hip/knee pain at home**

If you do not need to see a doctor straight away, consider managing and monitoring the problem at home.

You may find it helpful to:

- lose weight if you're overweight to relieve some of the strain on your joints.
- avoid activities that make the pain worse, such as downhill running
- wear flat shoes and avoid standing for long periods
- see a physiotherapist for some muscle-strengthening exercises
- take painkillers, such as [paracetamol](#) or [ibuprofen](#)

### **Overactivity**

If your hip/knee pain is related to exercising or other types of regular activity:

- cut down on the amount of exercise you do if it's too much
- consider changing the type of exercise and the frequency (two short sessions rather than one long session)
- always warm up before exercising and [stretch after exercising](#)
- try [low-impact exercises](#), such as [swimming](#) or [cycling](#), instead of running
- run on a smooth, soft surface, such as grass, rather than on concrete
- make sure your running shoes fit well and support your feet properly

### **Your knee / hip may gradually worsen over time – this is normal.**

However, if your mobility deteriorates dramatically due to your knee / hip problem, it may be necessary to get a new X-ray of the knee. If this is the case, please contact the secretary of your named consultant to inform them of the situation, and they will discuss this with your consultant. If you cannot find the name of your consultant, please contact any of the Secretaries as they will be able to direct your query in the most appropriate way.

### **Contact Us**

Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals - [01733 678000](tel:01733678000)

Hinchingbrooke Hospitals - [01480 416416](tel:01480416416)