



## Knee Straightening

Sitting on a chair, slowly straighten your knee until it is fully extended. Hold for around 5 seconds and then lower it back to the floor.

**Repeat up to 10 times.**



## Mini Squats

Stand behind a chair and support yourself with both hands. Slowly lower yourself down by bending your knees, but only squat as far as you can go without pain. Return to the start position.

**Repeat up to 10 times.**

## Things to look out for

**If you notice any of the following associated with your knee pain, please make an urgent appointment with your GP:**

- A fever or feeling unwell
- A red, hot and swollen knee
- Constant pain unchanged by activity or rest
- Unexplained weight loss
- Previous history of cancer

## Further information

For further information about knee pain, please see our advice pages  
[www.citycarephysio.org.uk](http://www.citycarephysio.org.uk)

[www.nottinghamcitycare.nhs.uk](http://www.nottinghamcitycare.nhs.uk)

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# Knee Pain

Your guide to managing your pain and relieving your symptoms

Knee pain is very common. It can occur for many reasons including simple sprains and strains, normal age-related changes or muscle weakness.

Pain may be felt around the whole of the knee or be localised to a specific area, for example under the kneecap.

Swelling and clicking in the joint (known as crepitus) are common. Some people experience giving way or locking (catching) of the knee.

Activities such as squatting, kneeling, stairs and walking can often be uncomfortable.



**NHS**

## What causes knee pain?

- **Sprains and strains**

The knee has many ligaments and muscles which enable it to work efficiently. Unusual or excessive activity or a fall can irritate these structures. Pain from sprains and strains generally settles after 3-6 weeks.

- **Repetitive activity**

Repeatedly performing the same activity or suddenly increasing your exercise levels can irritate the knee – particularly under the kneecap. With appropriate changes to your routine, this type of pain normally improves with time.

- **Normal age-related change**

This can cause discomfort, swelling and stiffness and may be worse first thing in the morning and after prolonged sitting or activity. Typically people with age-related pain will experience periods of increased discomfort which may last for a few weeks before settling down again.

## What can I do to help?

- **Exercise**

Performing specific exercises to improve the strength and flexibility of your knees may make day-to-day tasks easier and improve your pain. Some examples are given later. Regular general exercise is also useful.

- **Activity modification**

Whilst exercise is beneficial for your knees, reducing activities which are aggravating your pain for a short time may help your symptoms to settle. As your pain improves, these activities can be reintroduced gradually.

- **Medication**

When your pain is under control you are better able to keep active and exercise – things that will help your knee pain in the long term. Speak to your pharmacist or GP about what painkillers are suitable for you.

- **Weight loss**

If you are overweight, trying to lose some weight will reduce the load on your knees and often improve your pain, as well as being good for your general health.

- **Lifestyle**

Low mood, anxiety, stress, poor sleep and lack of exercise can all affect how we experience pain. Addressing these factors can improve symptoms and general well-being. Speak with your GP if you feel you need support with these issues.

## Do I need an x-ray or scan?

Investigations such as x-rays or MRI scans are not normally needed. Often they will show signs of normal age-related changes and this will not make any difference to how your knee pain is managed.

Sometimes further investigations are required but an assessment by a physiotherapist should help to establish if this is needed.

## Do I need surgery?

Most knee pain can be managed with a combination of exercise, medication and lifestyle changes. Occasionally surgery may be required for specific conditions such as ligament or cartilage tears.

Once again, an assessment by a physiotherapist should help to identify if surgery is required.

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## Simple Exercises

These exercises will improve the movement and strength in your knee. They may be mildly uncomfortable but should not be painful.

### Leg Lifts

Lying on your back with one leg straight and the other leg bent. Slowly lift your straight leg to about 20cm off the bed. Hold for 5 seconds and then slowly lower it back down.

**Repeat up to 10 times.**

