

Physiotherapy – Orthopaedics

Medial patello-femoral ligament reconstruction

This leaflet aims to give you some advice following medial patella-femoral ligament reconstruction. The operation is to try and stop the patella (kneecap) from dislocating again.

What to expect afterwards

Pain

A nerve block may be used during the operation. This means that immediately after the operation, your knee and leg may feel numb. This may last a few hours. Afterwards, your knee may feel sore. You will be given painkillers to reduce your discomfort whilst in hospital. These will be prescribed for you and should be continued as advised at home.

You must rest, ice, and raise your leg to reduce the pain and swelling around your knee.



Raise your leg in a straight position with the whole leg supported.



Patient Information

You will be given a VPULSE cuff to use while you are on the ward. This can be used whenever you are resting with your leg raised. Ask for the ice in the machine to be changed when the cuff feels warm.

When you go home, you will be able to take the “cuff” part with you. Make sure this is full of water before you leave, and it can then be put in the fridge or freezer and used as a cold pack.

Wound

Your knee will be bandaged. This is removed 24 hours after surgery, leaving the smaller dressings which cover your wounds. If you have stitches, you will be given instructions by the nursing staff for their removal at your GP surgery. They will also give you the information regarding general wound care.

Exercises

The success of your operation will often depend on you following your rehabilitation guide.

Although your knee may feel sore after the operation, it is important that you start doing the exercises to build up the muscles around your knee and to regain the range of movement after the surgery. Before being discharged, you will be seen by a physiotherapist who will advise and explain the exercises you need to complete.

Complete the exercises **5 times** a day.

You may experience some discomfort whilst completing the exercises. This is normal.

Prevention exercises – to prevent chest infections and blood clots post op

Deep breathing exercises

Take a deep breath in through your nose, hold for a couple of seconds and then breathe out through your mouth. Repeat this 3 times. **Complete these hourly.**

Patient Information

Foot and ankle exercises

Move your ankles up and down fairly quickly for 10 seconds. Then complete circles in each direction for 10 seconds. **Complete these hourly.**



Knee Rehabilitation

Early exercises

Heel Prop

Rest your heel on a rolled towel or 2 pillows so that your knee is not supported and so there is a gap between your calf and the bed. Allow your knee to straighten in this position for 2 minutes. As your knee becomes more comfortable build up the time towards 10 minutes.



Static quadriceps

Lie on your back with your knee straight. Push your heel away and tighten the muscles in your thigh. Hold for 10 seconds. **Repeat 10 times.**

During this exercise, you should feel your patella (kneecap) move upwards towards your hip. Due to the location of your surgery, this may feel uncomfortable, but it is important to remember you will not be doing your knee any harm.

Patient Information



Static hamstrings

Lie on your back with your knee slightly bent. Push down firmly into the bed with your heel. Hold for 5 seconds. **Repeat 10 times.**



Straight leg raise

Lie on the bed with your knee straight. Push your heel away and tighten the muscles in your thigh. Then try to lift your whole leg up, like a rod, off the bed by about 20cm. Hold for 5 seconds and slowly return to the start position. **Repeat 10 times.**



Patient Information

Active assisted knee flexion and extension

Lie or sit on the bed with your leg extended out in front of you. Place a plastic bag, or something to help your foot slide, underneath your heel. Using your hands to support around your thigh, bend your knee by drawing your heel towards your bottom. Fully straighten your knee after each repetition. **Repeat 10 times.**

You can also complete this exercise seated in a chair.



Patella (kneecap) glides

Sit on the edge of a chair with your leg out straight, heel on the floor and your muscles relaxed. Hold your kneecap as in the picture below.



Push the kneecap:

- towards your other knee
- down towards your toes
- up towards your hip

Patient Information

You may hear or feel the kneecap click or clunk. This is normal and safe. The glides may be hard to start with due to swelling and the wound dressings. Keep your leg relaxed and make sure that you are moving your kneecap, not just your skin.

Scar Massage

It is important to start (as soon as able) to massage your scar to help prevent it becoming too sensitive and painful to complete exercises. Your Physiotherapist will advise you when to begin this exercise.

Discharge

You are usually able to go home the day after your operation. You will need to arrange for someone to drive you home and you must have a responsible adult with you for the first 24 hours.

Physiotherapy is essential after your operation, and you will be contacted by your local Physiotherapy Department for an urgent physiotherapy appointment. If you have not heard from outpatient physiotherapy within one week, please contact the department (details in next section).

If you have any concerns regarding your wound, and if it:

- becomes red or inflamed (swollen or hot to touch)
- begins to ooze or discharge
- begins to bleed
- starts to smell

Please use this number to leave a message: 024 7696 8333. Any messages will be picked Monday-Friday, 7.30am-5.30pm and Saturday-Sunday, 7.30am-13.30pm.

For out of hours support you will need to go to A&E or the Urgent Treatment Centre.

Patient Information

Further information

If you have any queries or concerns about your physiotherapy, please telephone the **Orthopaedic Therapy Department** between 8am and 5pm.

Rugby St Cross: 01788 663054

University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire: 024 7696 5106

Or **Therapy Outpatient Department** between 8.30am and 4.30pm
Monday to Friday:

Rugby St Cross: 01788 663257

University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire: 024 7696 6013

The images were taken at the Trust.

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