

Post-op Total Knee Exercises: Phase II

Exercises: All exercises should be performed twice a day.

Stretching: Each exercise should be performed for a total of 5 minutes.

1. **Extension stretch:** Sit in a chair with your bottom on the edge of the seat. Extend your operated leg out straight in front of you. Push the back of your knee towards the floor while contracting the muscles of your thigh. Then, place both hands on your thigh just above the incision and push downward. Hold this stretch for 5 seconds. Relax for 5 seconds and repeat.
2. **Flexion stretch:** Sit in a chair with your bottom all the way to the back of the chair. Bend the operated knee to the most flexed position tolerated. Match that bent position with the other leg. Keep both feet planted on the floor and your bottom on the seat. Gently slide your bottom forward until intense pressure is felt on the operated side. Hold this for 5 seconds. Scoot back 1 inch to relieve some of the pressure and hold for 5 seconds. Then scoot forward to maximum flexion again and hold for 5 seconds. Repeat this cycle for a total of 5 minutes.

Strengthening: Work up to performing 30 repetitions for each exercise. When you can do 30 repetitions easily, add one pound of weight at the ankle, either with a commercial ankle weight or by placing one can of food in a purse hanging from your ankle. When you again reach 30 repetitions, increase to two pounds of weight and work back up to 30 repetitions. When you reach 30 repetitions with two pounds, your muscles are at a normal strength.

1. Straight leg raise

- Lie on your back with your non-operated knee bent. Lift the operated leg approximately 12-18 inches off the bed and contract all the muscles in the leg performing an "isometric" contraction. Hold it for 5 seconds and then slowly lower the leg down. Relax for 5 seconds and repeat.

2. Short arc knee extension

- Lie on your back with a roll under your knee (knee bent about 30 degrees). Tighten the front thigh muscles and lift your heel off the ground while pushing the back of your knee into the roll. Get your knee as straight as possible and hold for 5 seconds. Relax the heel back down to the ground for 5 seconds and repeat.

Stationary bicycle

- The stationary bicycle is a good exercise, if you have one available. The seat should be placed in a high position so that your knee is not flexed beyond 90 degrees. You should begin with gentle resistance and increase as tolerated.

Swimming

- This is an excellent exercise. Use a gentle flutter kick and avoid the frog kick. Side stroke with scissor kick is also allowable.

Walking

- Walking is also a good exercise. We encourage you to wear shoes that have a cushioned heel to avoid excessive impact on the knees while walking.

Driving

If you are no longer taking narcotic pain medications, you may begin to drive approximately six weeks after surgery but this should be approved by the provider.

Permanent restrictions

Activities such as singles tennis, racket ball, jogging, jumping, or lifting objects greater than 20 pounds on a routine basis are to be avoided. You should also avoid squats, lunges, and leg press as these cause excess load on the knees.

Exercise Examples:

Stretching

1



2



Strengthening

1



2

