

Thigh bone in a rail (LRS) or external fixator

After surgery on a broken bone



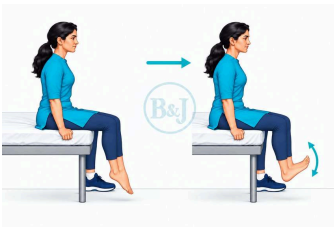
Count the weeks from the day of your operation. The date is on your discharge card.

If your doctor wrote a different plan on your prescription, follow that instead of this page.

First 2 weeks with the frame

Let the wound and pin sites settle, and start the knee moving.

Weight bearing As we tell you, with a walker.



Ankle pumps

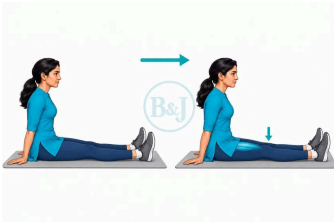
Pump the feet up and down to keep the blood moving.

10 times

Every hour

✓ **Should feel**
The calf working

✗ **Should not feel**
Calf pain or swelling — tell us



Quad sets

Sit with the leg straight. Press the back of the knee down and tighten the thigh.

Hold 5 seconds

10 times

3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**
The thigh muscle tightening

✗ **Should not feel**
Knee pain



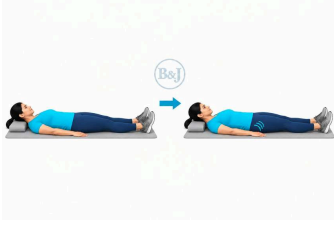
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Monday to Saturday · Sunday by prior appointment only



Buttock squeeze

Lie on your back with the legs straight. Squeeze the buttocks together, hold, then relax.

Hold 10 seconds

10 times

3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**

The buttocks tightening

✗ **Should not feel**

Back pain



Heel slides

Lie down and slide the heel up towards the buttock, bending the knee as far as you can.

10 times

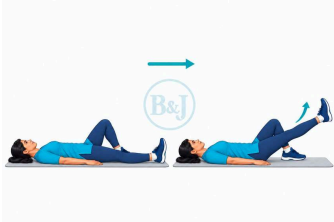
3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**

A stretch as the knee bends

✗ **Should not feel**

Sharp pain at the wound



Straight leg raise

Lie down, one knee bent. Keep the other knee straight and lift the leg 20 cm.

Hold 5 seconds

10 times

3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**

The thigh working

✗ **Should not feel**

The knee bending or back pain



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Terminal knee extension

Rest the heel on a rolled towel so the knee hangs free. Press the knee down straight.

5–10 minutes

3 times a day

✓ Should feel

The back of the knee stretching

X Should not feel

Sharp pain

Not yet Pillows under the frame (they keep the knee bent), or hot water on the pins.

Move to the next stage only after we have seen you, and the X-ray if one was planned.



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While the frame is on

Keep the knee bending past a right angle and getting fully straight. Carry on with the earlier exercises.

Weight bearing It increases as the X-ray allows. We will tell you how much.



Sitting knee bend

Sit on a firm chair. Slide the foot back under the chair to bend the knee, hold, then bring it forward.

10 times

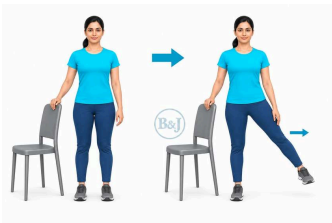
3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**

A stretch as the knee bends

✗ **Should not feel**

Sharp pain



Standing hip abduction

Hold a chair. Lift the leg out to the side, keeping the body upright.

10 times

Daily each side

✓ **Should feel**

The side of the hip working

✗ **Should not feel**

Leaning over



Standing hip extension

Hold a chair. Take the leg backwards, keeping it straight.

10 times

Daily each side

✓ **Should feel**

The buttock working

✗ **Should not feel**

Arching the back



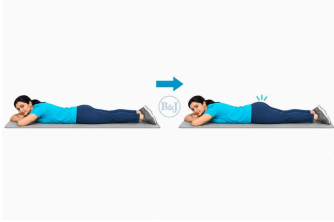
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Lying on the front, buttock squeeze

Lie on your front with the legs straight. Squeeze the buttocks and press the hips into the bed, hold, then relax.

Hold 10 seconds

10 times

Daily

✓ Should feel

The buttocks working and the front of the hip stretching

✗ Should not feel

Back pain

Not yet Bathing, swimming, or sea or river water.

Move to the next stage only after we have seen you, and the X-ray if one was planned.



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After the frame comes off

Build strength and walk without a limp.

Weight bearing As we tell you. It is often protected for a few weeks while the pin holes close.



Mini squat

Hold a support and bend the knees a little way.

10 times

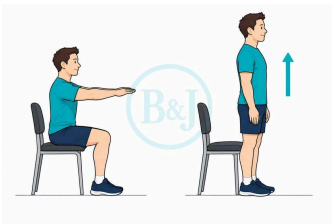
Daily

✓ Should feel

The thighs working

✗ Should not feel

Knee pain



Stand up from a chair

Sit towards the front of a firm chair. Fold the arms across the chest, lean forward over the knees, and stand up **without using your hands**. Lower yourself back down slowly.

10 times

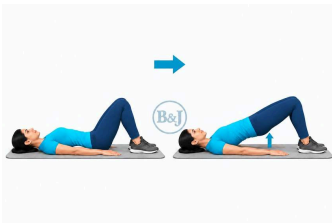
3 times a day

✓ Should feel

The thighs working, and a slow controlled sit

✗ Should not feel

Dropping into the chair



Bridging

Lie on your back, knees bent. Lift your hips off the floor, hold, then lower.

10 times

Daily

✓ Should feel

The buttocks and back of thighs working

✗ Should not feel

Cramp, or back pain



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Step-up

Hold a rail. Step up onto a low step with the operated leg, then step down with the other leg.

10 times

Daily

✓ **Should feel**

The thigh working

✗ **Should not feel**

The knee falling inwards



Step down

Stand on a low step and lower the other heel slowly towards the floor.

10 times

Daily

✓ **Should feel**

Controlled lowering

✗ **Should not feel**

The knee falling inwards



Single-leg balance

Stand on one leg beside a worktop.

30 seconds

3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**

Working to stay steady

✗ **Should not feel**

Losing balance — hold on



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Calf raises

Rise onto both toes and lower under control.

15 times

Daily

✓ **Should feel**
The calf working

✗ **Should not feel**
Sharp pain



Static cycling

Set the seat high, so the knee is almost straight at the bottom. Pedal gently with little resistance.

10 minutes

Daily

✓ **Should feel**
The knee moving freely

✗ **Should not feel**
Pain in the knee or hip

Not yet Running, until we clear you.

Caring for the pin sites

- Clean each pin site once a week, or more often if it is wet or leaking, with the chlorhexidine-in-alcohol solution we give you. Use non-fluffy gauze, never cotton wool.
- Keep each site covered with a clean dressing, gently pressed down.
- Leave the dry crust that seals a pin. Remove only loose dried fluid above it.
- No bath. Shower only on dressing day, then dry the frame and skin fully before the new dressing.
- A little clear, straw-coloured fluid is normal.
- Telephone us within a day if a pin site has more pain, spreading redness, more swelling, more discharge or pus. Telephone the same day if you also feel unwell or feverish.
- Take anti-inflammatory painkillers only as we prescribe; avoid long courses.

Living with the frame

- If the frame is lengthening the bone, turn it only as shown in clinic. Never start turning on your own.
- While the bone is being lengthened, come to clinic every week. Turning often aches for a while.
- Feeling low or frustrated during a long time in a frame is common. Tell us; help is available.



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Stop and telephone us if

- Sudden breathlessness or chest pain — go to the nearest hospital
- The calf becomes swollen, tight or painful, away from the pins
- A pin site with more pain, spreading redness, pus or more discharge
- You feel unwell or feverish
- The foot becomes numb, cold, pale or blue
- A pin or the frame feels loose, or you fall onto the frame



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