

After keyhole knee surgery: meniscus or ACL

After knee surgery

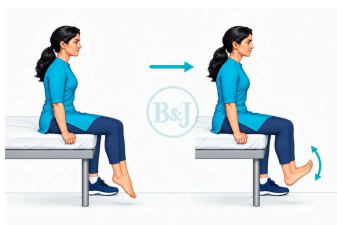


Count the weeks from the day of your operation. The date is on your discharge card.
If your doctor wrote a different plan on your prescription, follow that instead of this page.

Weeks 0–2

Bring the swelling down and get the knee fully straight. Put a cold pack wrapped in a cloth on the knee for 15 minutes, 3–4 times a day. After a meniscus repair, bend the knee only as far as we have written on your prescription.

Weight bearing As written on your prescription, with crutches, and the knee brace if we gave you one.



Ankle pumps

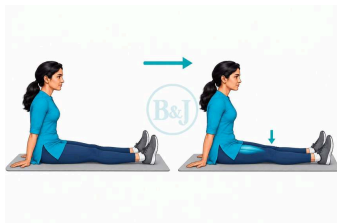
Pump the feet up and down to keep the blood moving.

20 times

Every hour while awake

✓ **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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Terminal knee extension

Heel on a rolled towel, knee hanging free. Press it straight.

Hold 5 seconds

10 times

3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**

The back of the knee stretching

✗ **Should not feel**

—



Straight leg raise

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

10 times

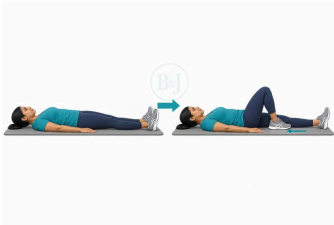
3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**

The thigh working

✗ **Should not feel**

The knee bending or 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

Not yet A pillow under the knee, twisting on the operated leg, or driving.

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



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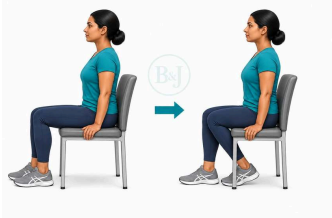
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Weeks 2–6

Stitches out. Walk with a normal step and get the knee bending past a right angle. Carry on with the earlier exercises.

Weight bearing Full, as comfortable, unless we have told you otherwise. After a meniscus repair, follow the date on your prescription.



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



Calf raises

Rise onto both toes and lower under control.

15 times

Daily

✓ **Should feel**

The calf working

✗ **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



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Mini wall sit

Back against a wall, slide down a little way, hold, then stand.

Hold 10 seconds

10 times

✓ Should feel

The thighs working

✗ Should not feel

Knee pain at the front



Single-leg balance

Stand on one leg. Progress to eyes closed.

30 seconds

3 times a day

✓ Should feel

Steady control

✗ Should not feel

The knee giving way

Not yet Squatting, sitting cross-legged, running or twisting.

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



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Weeks 6–12

Build thigh strength and balance. Carry on with the earlier exercises.

Weight bearing Full.



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



Step-up

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

10 times

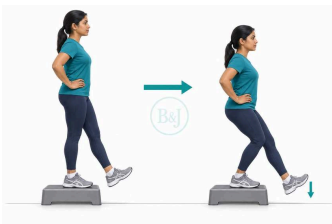
Daily

✓ **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



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Mini squat

Hold a support. Bend the knees a little way, then straighten.

10 times

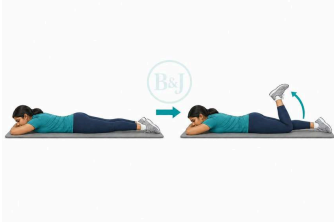
Daily

✓ **Should feel**

The thighs working

✗ **Should not feel**

Deep groin pain



Hamstring curl

Lying face down, bend the knee against light resistance.

12 times

Daily

✓ **Should feel**

The back of the thigh working

✗ **Should not feel**

Cramp

Not yet Running, jumping or turning sport. Squatting low or sitting on the floor until we have told you it is safe.

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Month 3 onwards

After a meniscus trim, most people are back to everything by now. After an ACL reconstruction, straight-line jogging starts at about 3–4 months if we agree, and sport with turning and jumping waits until at least 9 months and a strength check with us. Carry on with the third-stage exercises.

Weight bearing Full.



Single-leg balance

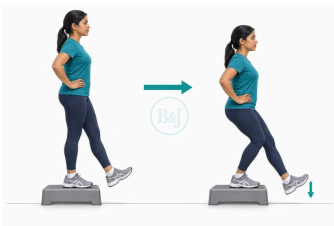
Stand on one leg. Progress to eyes closed.

30 seconds

3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**
Steady control

✗ **Should not feel**
The knee giving way



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

Not yet Football, kabaddi, cricket fielding or other turning and contact sport until we clear you.

Stop and telephone us if

- Sudden breathlessness or chest pain — go to the nearest hospital
- The calf becomes swollen, tight or painful
- The knee becomes hot, very swollen and very painful, or you have a fever
- Wound redness or discharge
- The knee still will not straighten fully at 2 weeks
- The knee locks or gives way



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