



The official fundraising arm of the  
Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital.

Our aim is to provide information that will help you understand  
your child's injury and enable the appropriate after-care.

There are lots of useful injury leaflets to download at the Royal  
Alexandra website; use the QR code below or follow the link:  
[www.bsuh.nhs.uk/alex/services/accident-and-emergency/](http://www.bsuh.nhs.uk/alex/services/accident-and-emergency/)



**Useful numbers:**

NHS 111 - 24hr advice line

Practice Plus (Brighton walk-in Centre) 0333 321 0946

Practice Plus GP - 0300 130 3333

8am/8pm - 7 days a week



Disclaimer: The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended  
to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

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University Hospitals Sussex  
NHS Foundation Trust

the  
alex

Children's Emergency Department



## Knee injury

Information for parents, carers & relatives

## My child has injured their knee

Knee injuries in children are common injuries and usually don't cause any long term problems. The knee joint is made up of:

- Ligaments: strong bands of tissue that connect bone to bone and help hold the joint together.
- Tendons and muscles
- Meniscus: the cartilage acts as a shock absorber in the knee joint.
- Cartilage and bones



A knee injury can involve any one of these and may result in pain, swelling and bruising, locking of the knee or the knee giving way. Knee sprains happen when the one of the ligaments gets twisted or torn. Strains are when the muscle or tendon gets over stretched and damaged.

## When should we come back to hospital?

If your child:

- Can't put weight on their knee at all or it keeps giving way
- Has severe pain even when not putting weight on their leg, such as at night
- Has a locked knee or it painfully clicks (painless clicking is OK)
- Is unable to fully bend or straighten their knee
- Has a fever, redness or heat around the knee, or it's very swollen
- Has pain, swelling, numbness or tingling of the calf beneath the affected knee
- Has pain that doesn't start to improve within a few weeks or pain that's still severe after a few days of caring for their knee at home

More knee information can be found on the Brighton Virtual Fracture Clinic website. Use the QR code or follow the link below.



<https://bit.ly/3qhM5H9>

### Is there anything else I need to know?

Depending on the severity, knee injuries can take between 6-12 weeks to heal. Your child should not participate in any sports, PE or high impact activities (such as trampolining, gymnastics, skateboarding etc.) until advised further.

Sometimes, knee injuries require further treatment or surgery. This will be arranged by the Orthopaedic team in fracture clinic; if needed, an appointment will be organised for your child before you leave.

### What if my child is fitted with a knee splint or bandage?

Splints temporarily immobilise and support the injured joint. In some cases it is ok to remove the splint for short periods of time when you're your child is at home.

Your child should complete the knee exercises as pain allows. They can also try walking without the splint a few steps at a time, gradually increasing the distance if they're able.



### What is the treatment for a knee injury?

**Pain relief** is an important part of your child's recovery and ability to walk. Give them regular Paracetamol and Ibuprofen as directed on the bottles/packets.

**Rest** will allow the healing process to begin. For the first few days your child should rest. If they are allowed to walk on their leg, they should reduce the amount of walking that they do.

**Ice packs** help to reduce swelling during the first few days, which in turn relieves pain. Wrap an ice pack or crushed-up ice in a towel/pillow case and place it on the swollen area for up to 15 minutes at a time.

**Elevation** also reduces swelling and pain. Ensure your child keeps their injured leg elevated (above hip level) as much as possible during the first few days.

**Exercises** are important and will help to reduce swelling, ease pain and can help to accelerate healing. In most cases they can be started straight away.

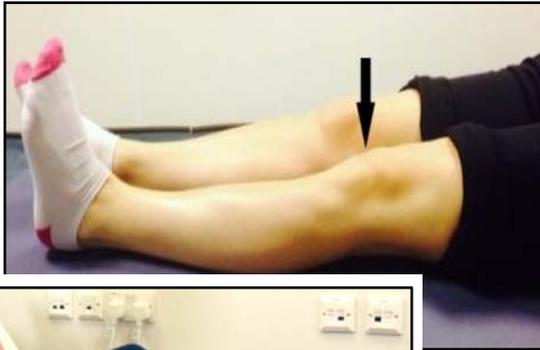
### The importance of knee exercises.

Exercises help to strengthen the knee joint, keeping it supple and stop it from becoming stiff and painful. Stretching the muscles that support the knee can help this too. Exercises should be repeated 3 times a day as pain allows.

## Exercises (3 times a day)

### 1: Static Quads Exercise

Gently tense the muscle in the thigh to straighten the knee, pushing the knee down into the floor or bed. Hold for 5 seconds and then relax. Repeat this 7-10 times.



### 2: Inner Quads Exercise

Place a rolled up towel or small pillow under the injured knee. Tense the thigh muscle and try to straighten the knee. Keep the back of the knee in contact with the towel/pillow. Repeat 10 times. If possible, try to hold the knee straight for 5 seconds.



### 3: Knee Flexion and Extension

Bend and straighten the injured leg as far as is comfortable. Repeat 7-10 times further. Repeat 7-10 times.



When you can do the first few exercises, start these.

### 4: Seated Knee Extension

Sit on a chair with both feet on the floor. Straighten your injured knee to lift the foot off the ground. Repeat 10 times. If able, hold your leg straight for up to 5 seconds.

