

Courtesy of:

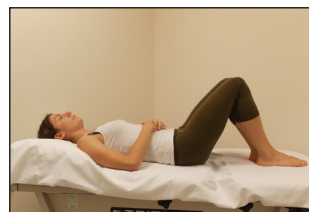


Regular exercise is necessary to restore your knee mobility and strength. For the most part, these exercises can be done at home. We recommend that you exercise approximately 20-30 minutes, two or three times a day. A walking program may also be beneficial. The following guide can help you better understand an exercise program for your knee after surgery. This program may be supervised by a physical therapist, if you wish. As you increase the intensity of your exercise program, you may experience temporary setbacks. If your knee swells or hurts after a particular exercise activity, you should lessen the intensity or stop the activity until you feel better. Another helpful tip is RICE: Rest, Ice, Compress (with an elastic bandage) and Elevate your knee. Contact your surgeon's office if your symptoms continue after using the RICE technique.

Initial Exercise Program

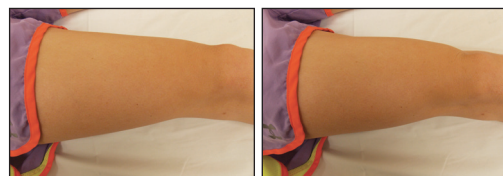
Hamstring contraction:

There should be no movement during this exercise. Lie or sit with your knees bent to about 60 degrees. Pull your heel into the floor, tightening the muscles on the back of your thigh. Hold 5 seconds then relax. Repeat 10 times.



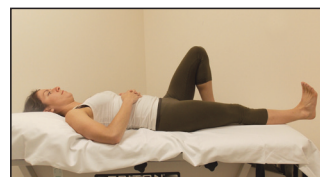
Quadriceps contraction:

Lie on your back with a towel under the ankle of your operated knee. Tighten the front of your thigh. Hold for 5 seconds. Relax. Repeat 10 times.

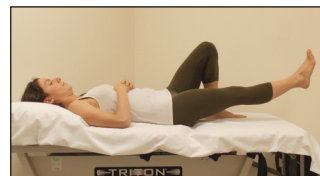


Straight leg raise:

Lie on your back, with your non-surgical knee bent; straighten your surgical knee. Slowly lift your surgical leg about 12 inches and hold for 5 seconds. Return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times.

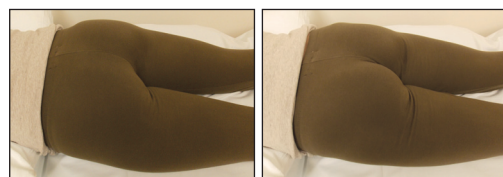


Advanced: Before starting, add weights to your ankle, starting with 1 pound of weight and building up to a maximum of 5 pounds of weight over 4 weeks.



Buttock tucks:

While lying down on your back or stomach, tighten your buttock muscles. Hold tightly for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.

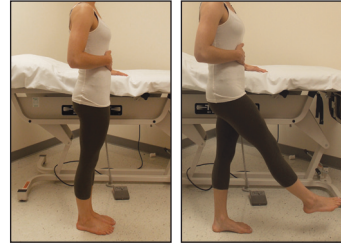


If you have questions, please contact our team by email to physical.therapy@hitchcock.org or call (603) 650-7788.

Straight leg raises, standing:

Support yourself by holding a wall or countertop, if necessary, and slowly lift your leg forward keeping your knee straight. Return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times.

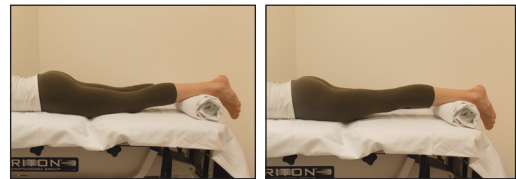
Advanced: Before starting, add weights to your ankle, begin with 1 pound of weight and building to a maximum of 5 pounds of weight over 4 weeks.



Intermediate Exercise Program

Terminal knee extension, prone:

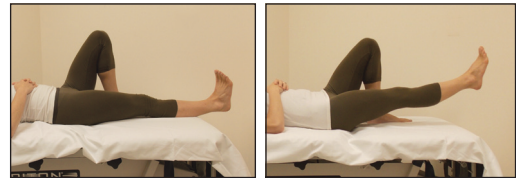
Lie on your stomach with a towel roll under your ankle. Straighten your knee (still supported by the roll) and hold 5 seconds. Slowly return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times.



Straight leg raises:

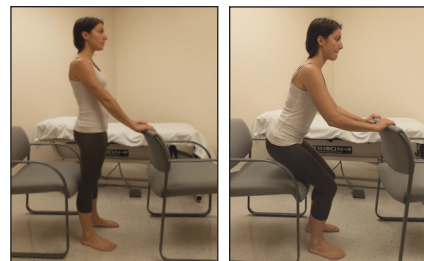
Lie on your back, with your non-surgical knee bent. Straighten your other knee by squeezing your quadriceps muscle (upper thigh). Then, slowly raise your leg until your foot is about 12 inches from the floor. Slowly lower it to the floor and relax. Repeat 10 times, 2 sets.

Advanced: Before starting, add weights to your ankle, starting with 1 pound of weight and building to a maximum of 5 pounds of weight over 4 weeks. Your knee should remain completely straight throughout the exercise.



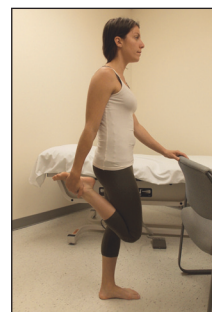
Partial squat with chair:

Hold onto a sturdy chair or counter with your feet 6-12 inches from the chair or counter. Do not bend all the way down. DO NOT go any lower than 90 degrees. Keep your back straight. Hold for 5-10 seconds. Slowly come back up. Relax. Repeat 10 times.



Quadriceps stretch, standing:

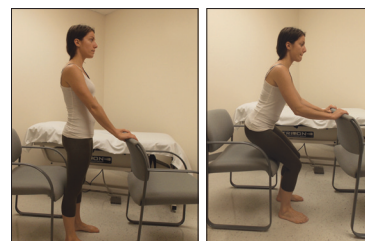
Standing with the non-surgical knee bent, gently pull your heel toward your buttocks. You should feel a stretch in the front of your leg. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat 2 times.



Advanced Exercise Program

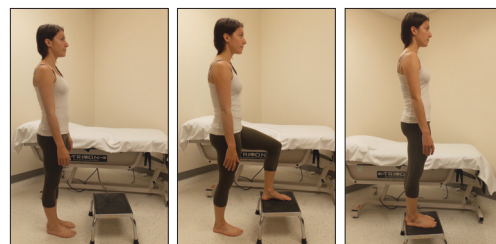
Partial knee bend, single leg:

Stand, supporting yourself with the back of a chair. Bend your non-surgical leg with your toe touching for balance, as needed. Slowly lower yourself, keeping your foot flat. Do not overdo this exercise. Straighten up to the starting position. Relax. Repeat 10 times.



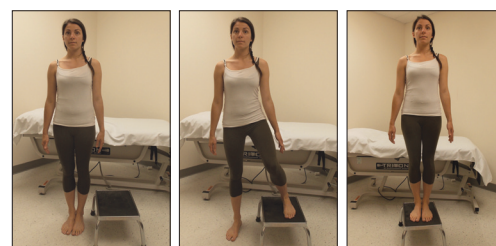
Step-ups, forward:

Step forward up onto a 6-inch high stool, leading with your surgical leg. Step down, returning to the starting position. Increase the height of the platform as your strength increases. Repeat 10 times.



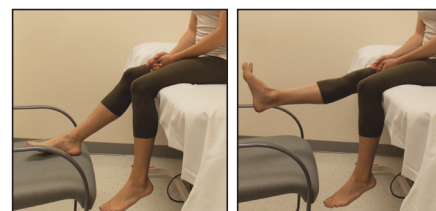
Step-ups, lateral:

Step up onto a 6-inch high stool, leading with your surgical leg. Step down, returning to the starting position. Increase the height of the platform as your strength increases. Repeat 10 times.



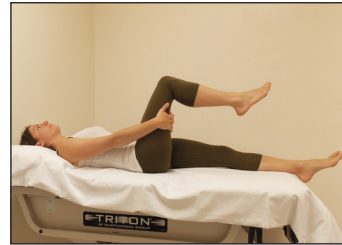
Terminal knee extension, sitting:

While sitting in a chair, support the heel of your surgical leg on a stool. Now straighten your knee, hold 5 seconds and slowly return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times.



Hamstring stretch, supine:

Lie on your back. Bend your hip by grasping your thigh just above the knee. Slowly straighten your knee until you feel tightness behind your thigh. Hold for 30 seconds. Relax. Repeat with the other leg. If you do not feel this stretch, bend your hip a little more and repeat. Be sure not to bounce! Maintain a steady, prolonged stretch for the maximum benefit. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat 2 times.

**Exercise bike:**

Start pedaling for 10 minutes a day. If you have access to an exercise bike, set the seat high so your foot can barely reach the pedal as you complete a full revolution. Set the resistance to "light." Increase the duration by one minute a day until you are pedaling 20 minutes a day. Once you are able to pedal for 20 minutes, gradually increase the pedaling resistance.

Walking:

Walking is an excellent physical activity in the middle stages of your recovery from surgery (after 2 weeks). Only walk if you are able to do so without a limp and without a notable increase in pain.

Running:

Running should be avoided until 6 to 8 weeks after your surgery because of the impact and shock forces to your knee. Walking and running activities should be gradually phased into your exercise program.