

Fracture Clinic Patient Information Leaflet

Advice after a knee cap (patella) injury

Your injury

Injuries to the knee cap or patella are common; this can be a fracture or a dislocation. A fracture is the same as a break in the bone. A dislocation is when the knee cap moves out of position.

The common symptoms following this type of injury include:

- Pain straight after an injury
- Swelling, mostly over the injured area
- Bruising
- Inability to weight bear
- Deformity at the site of injury



Your treatment plan

You may be put in a brace or occasionally a cast to support your knee; this will be used for 2-6 weeks whilst the injury heals. You will be given specific advice depending on the type of injury you have. Initially, you are likely to require crutches or a frame to help you move safely.

You will be given an appointment to return to fracture clinic for follow up as needed. Occasionally a knee injury requires surgery. If this is the case your treating team will discuss this with you.

What should I do at home?

- Use over the counter pain killers as required.
- Elevate the injured leg when resting to help reduce swelling.
- In the first couple of weeks after injury, minimise the amount you move around to allow the pain and swelling to settle.
- Use ice over the injured area to help with pain and swelling – an ice pack or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a tea towel can be used for 10 minutes at a time.
- You should not drive whilst in a brace or cast.
- You can return to work or school as soon as you are able to do your normal duties.

How long will it take to heal?

Most knee injuries heal without any problems in around six weeks. However, it may take several months for your symptoms to settle completely – these can include pain or discomfort, stiffness, swelling, and decreased strength. The bones may take longer to heal if you suffer from diabetes or if you smoke. For advice on stopping smoking please visit www.nhs.uk/smokefree or discuss this with your GP.

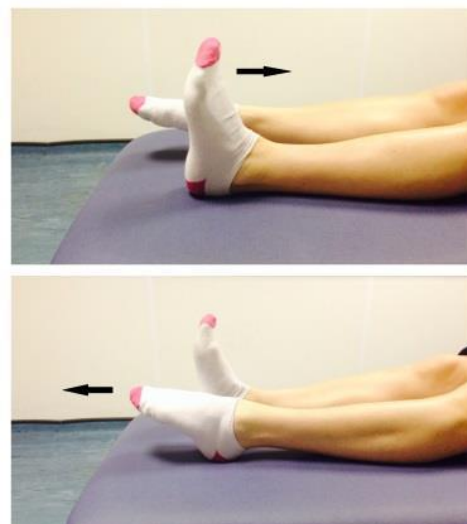
Once the injury has started to heal some people might be referred to their local physiotherapy department for assessment, advice and rehabilitation.

Exercises

You should try to do these exercises three to four times a day; you can start them immediately if you have been given a boot or once the cast is removed.

Repeat these ten times each:

1. Point your foot up and down within a comfortable range of movement.



2. With the leg straight and supported, gently tense your thigh muscle and try to straighten your knee further. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat 7-10 times.



**If you have any worries or concerns please contact one of the following:
Virtual Fracture Clinic Helpline 01225 821668 or Fracture Clinic 01225 825602**

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG
01225 428331 www.ruh.nhs.uk

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656 or 826319