

Exercise Guide for Total Knee Replacement Surgery

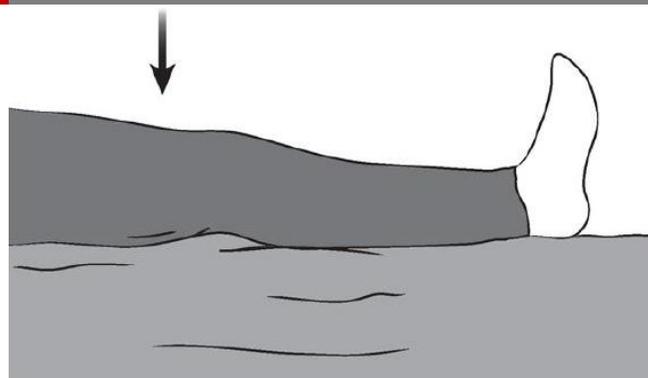
Based on recommendations from
the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons
(AAOS)
orthoinfo.aaos.org

Early Postoperative Exercises

- ❖ The main goal of these exercises is to strengthen your muscles and to improve the motion of your knee
- ❖ These exercises have the added benefit of increasing the blood flow through your legs that helps to prevent blood clots
- ❖ You may begin as early as right after surgery in the recovery room
- ❖ There will be discomfort in the beginning, but these exercises will help speed up your recovery and will also help with pain
- ❖ **All exercises should be done at least TWICE A DAY – EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK**
- ❖ *If you start to feel pain or tired during a certain exercise: stop, take a break, and switch to a different exercise. You may return to that exercise later when you feel that it is safe to do so.*

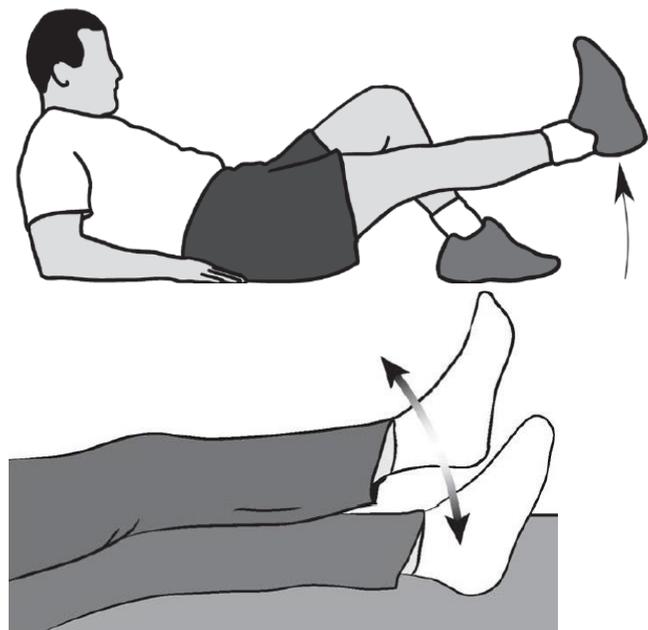
Quadriceps Sets

- ❖ **Target muscles: Quadriceps** – the exercise will be felt at the front of your thigh
- ❖ **Equipment needed:** none
- ❖ **Directions:**
 - ▶ Lay down face up
 - ▶ With your surgical leg positioned straight, tighten your thigh muscle to straighten your knee further
 - ▶ Hold for about 5 seconds, relax, and repeat
 - ▶ Switch and repeat for your other leg
- ❖ **Repetitions:** 3 sets of 10 repetitions. Repeat twice a day.



Straight Leg Raises

- ❖ **Target muscles: Quadriceps and Hip Flexors** – the exercise will be felt at the front of your thigh
- ❖ **Equipment needed:** none
- ❖ **Directions:**
 - ▶ Lay face up on the bed or floor and position your elbows directly under your shoulders to support your upper body
 - ▶ Keep your surgical leg straight and bend your other leg until your foot is flat on the floor
 - ▶ While keeping your surgical leg straight, slowly raise it about 6 inches off from the floor
 - ▶ Hold your leg in this position for 5 seconds, then relax and slowly bring the leg back down to the floor. Repeat.
 - ▶ Switch and repeat for your other leg
- ❖ **Repetitions:** 3 sets of 10 repetitions. Repeat twice a day.

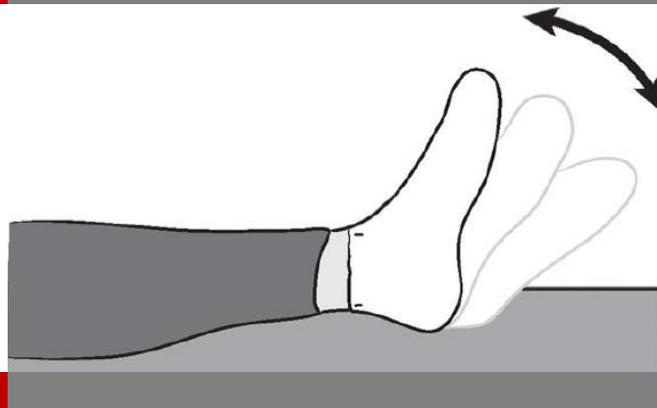


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Ankle Pumps

- ❖ **Target muscles:** **Tibialis anterior** and **gastrocnemius** – the exercise will be felt at both the **front and back of your lower leg**
- ❖ **Equipment needed:** none
- ❖ **Directions:**
 - ▶ Move your foot up and down by tightening your shin and calf muscles, respectively
 - ▶ Switch and repeat for your other leg
- ❖ **Repetitions:** 3 sets of 10 repetitions. Repeat twice a day.



Knee Straightening (Sitting)

- ❖ **Target muscles:** **Quadriceps** – the exercise will be felt at the **front of your thigh**
- ❖ **Equipment needed:** chair
- ❖ **Directions:**
 - ▶ To be done while sitting on a chair
 - ▶ Tighten your thigh muscle on your surgical leg and straighten your knee out as far as you can
 - ▶ Hold straight for about 5 seconds. Repeat.
 - ▶ Switch and repeat for your other leg
- ❖ **Repetitions:** 3 sets of 10 repetitions. Repeat twice a day.

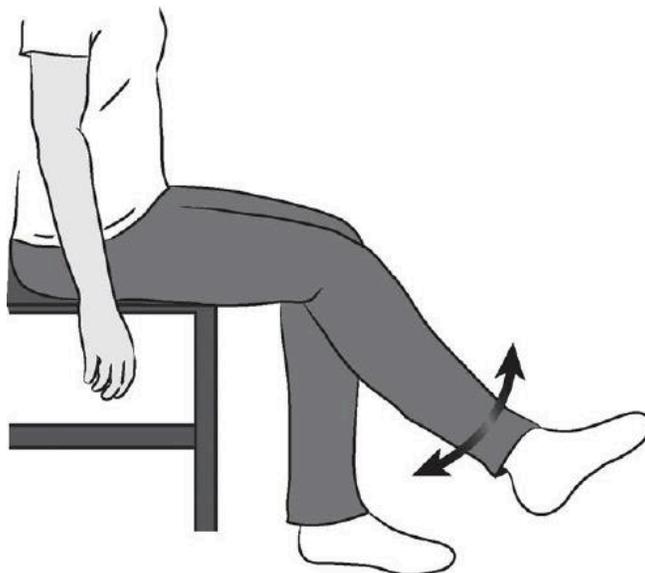


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Knee Bends / Heel Slides

- ❖ **Target muscles: Hamstrings** – the exercise will be felt at the **back of your thigh**
- ❖ **Equipment needed:** bed and/or chair
- ❖ **Directions:** to be done while **SITTING BEDSIDE OR IN A CHAIR (UNSUPPORTED bends)**
 - ▶ Sit with your thighs supported on the edge (unsupported is in reference to the movement of your surgical leg)
 - ▶ Bend your knee as far as you can until your foot is on the floor
 - ▶ With the foot still resting on the floor, slide your upper body forward to give yourself more room to bend further
 - ▶ Continue to bend your knee further and hold for 5 second or more
 - ▶ Relax and slowly straighten your knee back out. Repeat.
 - ▶ Switch and repeat for your other leg
- ❖ **Repetitions:** 3 sets of 10 repetitions. Repeat twice a day.



Assisted Knee Bends

- ❖ **Target muscles: Hamstrings** – the exercise will be felt at the **back of your thigh**
- ❖ **Equipment needed:** towel
- ❖ **Directions:**
 - ▶ Lay down on your back and straighten out your non-surgical leg
 - ▶ Wrap a folded towel over the lower shin of your surgical leg
 - ▶ Bend your knee and gently pull the towel towards to help bend your knee more
 - ▶ Hold for about 5 seconds or more
 - ▶ Slowly release and straighten out your leg. Repeat
 - ▶ Switch and repeat for your other leg
- ❖ **Repetitions:** 3 sets of 10 repetitions. Repeat twice a day.

