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## **Physiotherapy Information Leaflet Knee Fracture**

**Physiotherapy Department**

## **What can I expect after the plaster is removed?**

**Pain, stiffness, swelling, dry skin and weakness are frequent symptoms experienced after your plaster is removed.**

**Pain** can be eased by simple analgesics prescribed by your GP or Consultant. The pain that you experience once the plaster is removed may last for at least 6 weeks.

**Ice** or **heat** may also help reduce your pain. Heat can be applied simply in a bath of hot water or by a hot water bottle/wheat pack wrapped in a towel. Ice may be applied by placing a bag of frozen peas in a damp towel. Either can be applied for 15-20 minutes up to 4 times a day.

You may notice that you have **swelling** once the plaster is removed. Elevating the ankle, higher than your hip, can help reduce swelling and applying ice as previously mentioned.

It is normal for you to experience **stiffness** after your plaster is removed, again this can persist for several weeks/months.

Following the appropriate exercise programme can ease this. A Physiotherapist may also try gentle mobilisations to ease the stiffness

You may notice that you feel **weak** after your plaster is removed. Again with appropriate exercises and general use of your leg this will improve with time.

Often people find that their **skin** is dry and scaly once the plaster is removed. By massaging a simple moisturiser or baby oil frequently to the skin after washing your skin will improve.

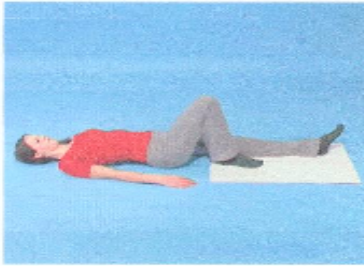
You may notice a **lump** or bump at your knee. This is part of the healing process as extra bone is laid down to heal the fracture. With time this is often re-absorbed although it may always be evident.

You may also feel **vulnerable** without your plaster. Sometimes tubi-grip or a knee support may help support the knee and also remind people that you have had an injury.

**It is important to remember that all these things are normal after your plaster has been removed.**

**It is also important to remember that you have had a fracture and that your leg will not return to normal straight after the plaster is removed.**

**Provided that you exercise and use your leg as much as possible it will improve with time and patience.**



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Lying on your back, with a tray/duster underneath your foot.  
Slowly slide your knee backwards & forwards  
Repeat for approx 5 minutes



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Lying down, keep your leg straight.  
Push your knee downwards into the bed tensing your thigh muscle  
Hold for approx 5 seconds  
Repeat        times



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Lying down, place a pillow underneath your knee.  
Straighten your leg from the knee, keeping your thigh on the pillow.  
Hold for approx 5 seconds  
Repeat        times



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Lying down, keeping your leg straight.  
Lift your leg 6 inches of the floor.  
Hold for approx 5 minutes  
Repeat        times

## Data Protection

Any personal information is kept confidential. There may be occasions where your information needs to be shared with other care professionals to ensure you receive the best care possible.

In order to assist us improve the services available your information may be used for clinical audit, research, teaching and anonymised for National NHS Reviews. Further information is available in the leaflet Disclosure of Confidential Information IL137, via Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust website or the PALS Service

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