

**NHS Forth Valley
Physiotherapy Services**

Knee Osteoarthritis

Patient Information Leaflet

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page consisting of two overlapping, wavy, light blue shapes that resemble stylized waves or a ribbon, extending across the width of the page.

What is Osteoarthritis?

Arthritis means inflammation of the joints. Osteoarthritis (OA) mainly affects the joint cartilage and the bone tissue next to the cartilage. Commonly OA is referred to as “wear and tear”.

What causes OA?

Exact reasons why some joints become worn are not clear. Factors involved may include age, previous injury, occupation, hobbies and weight.

How common is OA?

It is the most common form of arthritis in the UK. Most people have at least one worn joint once over 65. However, only 1 in 10 people have symptoms.

OA and x-rays

The x-ray results often do not match the symptoms. Some can have a lot of pain or stiffness with little showing on x-ray whereas some will have findings on x-ray but no symptoms.

What are the symptoms of OA?

- Pain
- Stiffness and decreased movement
- Swelling
- Muscle weakness and wasting
- Decreased mobility and fitness

What is the outlook of OA?

There is no “cure” for OA, however it is wrong to think that OA is always progressive or serious. Often symptoms come and go and will vary depending on many factors such as activity and weight.

What can I do about OA?

Weight Loss

Reducing excess weight is very helpful in decreasing overall force through the joint.

Walking Aids

Using a stick in the hand opposite to the problematic knee can help.

Exercise

Pain often prevents activity, resulting in loss of fitness and strength round the joint. Exercise increases muscle control, improves fitness and decrease stress at the joint. Avoid high impact activities i.e. running. Try activities like swimming, aqua-aerobics or an exercise bike.

Medication

Over the counter medication can help. If your pain is well controlled this will allow you to exercise the joint. Consult your pharmacist or GP for advice on medication.

Supplements

Food supplements like glucosamine and chondroitin may be of some benefit, discuss this with your GP.

Footwear

Supportive, shock-absorbing shoes may help. Avoid shoes that have hard soles or are excessively worn.

Heat or Ice (*Can help to take edge off the pain*)

Heat: Hot water bottle, shower or bath. 15-20 mins.

Ice: Frozen peas etc. Every 3-4 hours, 15-20 mins.

In both cases remember to use a tea towel etc. to protect your skin.

Surgery

Most people with OA do not require surgery. It may be considered if the previous options have had little success.

Exercises

This programme can be used as a guide to safely continue exercising at home. Exercise for a few minutes or count the number of repetitions you do for each exercise. This will allow you to notice progress. Your pain should not increase after these exercises.

Bend and straighten your knee slowly as far as you can.



Step up on to low step, with one leg leading and then repeat with the other leg leading.



Stand up and down slowly from a chair. This exercise can be made harder by using a lower chair and not using your arms.



Sitting pull your toes up and straighten your knee. Hold for 5 seconds, and then lower slowly.

If you feel you need further help and have not already been referred to a physiotherapist, contact your GP.

Contact details

Physiotherapy Department

SRI 01786 434061

FDRI 01324 616038

You can obtain the service of an interpreter or have this document translated in your own language by contacting the interpreting services on 0845 130 1170. These services are available free of charge.

ਤੁਸੀਂ, 0845 130 1170 ਤੇ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਆ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ (interpreting services) ਨੂੰ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਹ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਜਾਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਆਪਣੀ ਬੋਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਲੈ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ। ਇਹ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਮੁਫਤ ਹਨ।

آپ 0845 130 1170 پر انٹریپرٹنگ سروس سے رابطہ کر کے کسی مترجم کی خدمات حاصل کر سکتے ہیں یا اس دستاویز کا ترجمہ اپنی زبان میں کرا سکتے ہیں۔ یہ خدمات مفت دستیاب ہے۔

您可以通過撥打翻譯服務熱綫 0845 130 1170 取得翻譯員服務或得到此文件的翻譯版本。 這些服務都是免費的。

Galite prasyti vertejo paslaugu arba gauti sita dokumenta isversta I jusu kalba kreipdamiesi I musu vertimo paslaugu biura skambindami 0845 130 1170. Sitos paslaugos yra nemokamos.

يمكنك الحصول على خدمة الترجمة الفورية أو القيام بترجمة هذه الوثيقة إلى لغتك الأصلية عن طريق الإتصال بخدمات الترجمة الفورية على رقم 0845 130 1170. هذه الخدمات متاحة مجاناً بدون أى مقابل مادي.

Dzwoniąc do biura tłumaczeń pod numer 0845 130 1170 możecie Państwo prosić o tłumacza albo otrzymać ten dokument przetłumaczony na wasz język ojczysty. Powyżej wymienione usługi są darmowe.

If you, or someone you know, would like this in an alternative format, such as audiotape or large print then please phone us free on 0800 456033, fax your request to 01786 470984 or email us at yourhealthservice@fvhb.scot.nhs.uk

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