

Knee Conditioning Guidelines

Knee pain is a common cause for discomfort both in sporting populations and also as we age – often resulting from generalised wear and tear in this context. Pain-related disuse of the knee joint will lead to loss of muscle strength, control and flexibility – addressing these factors with the simple exercises described in this handout will help to improve your knee pain.

The guidelines and exercises described below are some of the more basic and effective strategies utilised to restore normal knee function following pain-related disuse – your physiotherapist will discuss with you any specific adaptations, progressions and precautions that have been tailored to your individual presentation. Any acute injury should be assessed by your physiotherapist prior to starting a rehabilitation program.

Flexibility

1) Static Quads Stretch

- Holding ankle, bend knee up towards buttocks
- Should feel stretch through front of thigh
- Only bend knee as far as knee can tolerate and maintain straight alignment
- Hold stretch for 30 seconds
- **Do not push into pain**



2) Static Glute Stretch

- Option 1: Lying on your back, bend both knees up to 45 degrees. Place ankle of targeted leg on opposite knee and pull knee to chest
- Option 2: Lying on your back, pull your knee up towards your opposite shoulder
- Hold stretch for 30 seconds
- **Do not push into pain**



Client:

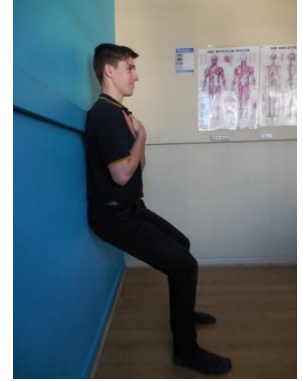
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Strength + Control

1) Wall Squat

- Stand with back flat against a wall
- Walk feet forward from wall
- Feet should be shoulder width apart and aligned with knees
- Slowly bend knees down into a squat position – do not let knees track forward over toes
- Straighten knees by driving back up through heels
- **Do not bend knees to the point of pain onset**



2) Clams

- Lie on your side with knees bent, feet in line with body
- Roll the top hip forward slightly, keeping a small gap between the waist and the floor
- Maintain core activation and neutral spine throughout movement
- Keep heels together and squeeze top buttock to separate knees
- Ensure that the motion is slow (3 seconds up and 3 seconds down), smooth and controlled



3) Single leg knee control squat

- Balancing on your affected leg
- Slowly bend your knee aiming to touch as far in front of you as you can without falling over with your other foot
- Don't weight bare through the front of your foot
- Key point – aim to keep your hips, knees and foot in alignment, don't allow your knee to drop in
- Use a mirror if you are unsure of how your knee is moving
- Your physiotherapist will explain this exercise to you before prescribing it.



4) Single leg step down

- Stand on a step
- Step down with your unaffected leg, toes up so your heel touches the ground first
- Lower as far as you can while keeping hip, knee and ankle in good alignment

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