

Physiotherapy after removal of metalwork – lower limb

Information for patients

This booklet will provide you with physiotherapy advice to help your rehabilitation after surgery. It is a guide only and the therapy you need may vary.

Physiotherapy aims to improve the movement, strength and function of the joint which has been operated on.

You play a very important role in your own recovery, so it is important that you do all the exercises and follow the advice we give you.

If at any time during your rehabilitation you have difficulty following our advice or exercises, please contact the Orthopaedic Physiotherapy Team at Orpington Hospital on 01689 866255 or King's College Hospital (Denmark Hill) on 020 3299 2368 and ask to speak with one of the physiotherapists.

Pain control

You will experience some pain or discomfort after your operation. To control the pain when you go home, take pain relief as advised by the ward doctor. It is important that you take pain relief before doing your exercises so you can start moving the joint as soon as possible after your operation.

Ice

Ice can help relieve pain and manage swelling. It can help to reduce inflammation which can cause pain. When bandaging has been removed, you can lift your leg and apply ice for 20 minutes wrapped inside a damp towel. It is important to look after your skin during and after using ice. If you have concerns that there are changes in colour of the skin, please seek medical advice.

Resting position

You can lift your leg so that the foot is higher than the hip to help manage swelling and pain control.

Returning to work

You must set aside to help you to recover after your operation. You may be able to return to work within a couple of weeks of your surgery, but it is important to check this with your consultant as you may be restricted from some activities.

Driving

You should not drive until you are able to competently perform an emergency stop and are given guidance by your consultant. Before driving, check your insurance policy to make sure you are covered following your surgery

Exercises

Your physiotherapist will provide you with exercises that are designed to improve movement and strength of particular muscles to help restore function after your surgery. You should aim to do the exercises when you return from your operation. They should be completed twice a day. Please see the separate specific exercise sheets that your physiotherapist has provided for further information.

Walking and moving after your surgery

It is important to move soon after your operation to reduce the risk of a blood clot, stiffness and to promote bone healing.

Your physiotherapist may give you a walking aid after your surgery and will teach you how to walk safely with it. Some people can fully weight-bear straight away and some people are instructed to partial weight-bear. This means walking with only 50% (half) of your weight on your operated leg. This means you must always walk with your crutches.

Fully weight-bearing

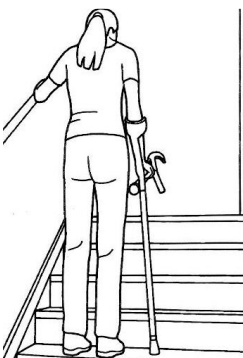
Partial weight-bearing

for..... weeks

Stairs

Your physiotherapist will advise you how to go up and down stairs.

Here are the recommended ways to go up and down stairs:



Walking up stairs

Stand close to the stairs.

Hold onto the handrail with one hand and the crutch or crutches with the other hand.

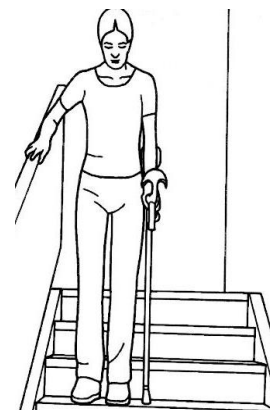
First step up with your non-operated leg, then your operated leg and then bring your crutch up on to the step. Always go one step at a time.

Walking down stairs

Stand close to the stairs.

Hold onto the handrail with one hand and the crutch or crutches with the other hand.

First put your crutch one step down, and then take a step with your operated leg. Then step down with your non-operated leg on to the same step as your operated leg. Always do one step at a time.



Ongoing physiotherapy

We do not usually refer onwards for outpatient physiotherapy. If this is necessary, we will refer you to an appropriate outpatient department. Your physiotherapist may discuss this with you further.

Sharing your information

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has partnered with Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust through the King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas' hospitals. King's College Hospital and Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trusts share an electronic patient record system, which means information about your health record can be accessed safely and securely by health and care staff at both Trusts. For more information visit www.kch.nhs.uk.

Care provided by students

We provide clinical training where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS

Tel: 020 3299 3601

Email: kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net

PALS at Princess Royal University Hospital, Farnborough Common, Orpington, Kent BR6 8ND

Tel: 01689 863252

Email: kch-tr.palspruh@nhs.net

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Communications and Interpreting telephone line on 020 3299 4826 or email kch-tr.accessibility@nhs.net