

Exercises for Chronic Knee Pain

This strengthening and stretching program will help lessen your pain, and get you stronger and more flexible, so you can do the activities you enjoy with less pain and effort. Choose a time of day that best fits your daily routine. Please talk with your primary care provider or physical therapist if you have questions or concerns.

Strengthening

1. Wall squat

- Lean your back against a wall or closed door with your feet hip distance apart.
- Slide your body down the wall/door until you feel your thigh muscles working or you reach a position similar to sitting in a chair.
- Hold the position, and then go back to the standing position.

Tips

- Be sure your heels are 18 to 20 inches from the wall.
- Your knees should not go out farther than your toes.



Repetitions	Number of Sets	Days per Week
10	3	3 to 5

2. Straight leg raise on your side

- Lie on your side on a bed or a mat on the floor.
- Bend your bottom leg for support.
- Slowly raise your top leg up toward the ceiling.
- Keep your top knee straight and in line with your body.



Tips

- Keep your shoulders in line with hips and your foot in a straight line.
- Do not let your hips roll forward or backward.

Repetitions	Number of Sets	Days per Week
10	3	3 to 5

3. Straight leg raise on your back

- Lie on your back on a bed or a mat on the floor.
- Bend 1 knee with your foot on the bed/floor to protect your back.
- With your other leg, tighten your front thigh muscle and raise your leg 8 to 12 inches off the bed/floor.
- Hold for 5 seconds, and then slowly lower your leg to the bed/floor.



Tip

Your straight leg should not go higher than your bent leg.

Repetitions	Number of Sets	Days per Week
10	3	3 to 5

Stretching

1. Hamstring stretch

Seated

- a. Sit on a sturdy chair on a non-slip floor.
- b. Bend one knee, putting your foot flat on the floor.
- c. Straighten your other leg, keeping your heel on the floor.
- d. Gently lean forward until a stretch is felt behind your straight knee/thigh.



Alternate position for hamstring stretch

- a. Lie on your back.
- b. Raise your leg and hold the back of your thigh until a stretch is felt behind your knee/thigh.



Tip

Tighten your stomach muscles to support your back as you do the exercise.

Hold	Repetitions	Days per Week
30 seconds	3	Daily

2. Quadriceps stretch

- a. Stand at a counter or sturdy chair on a non-slip floor.
- b. Stand on 1 leg and bend your other knee and place that foot on a surface behind you.
- c. Feel a gentle stretch in the front of your thigh.

Tips

- Use arm support if needed.
- Raise or lower the surface behind you to feel the stretch.



Hold	Repetitions	Days per Week
30 seconds	3	Daily