

Rejuvenate your knees



The condition

Osteo-arthritis (OA) is a common cause of knee pain for people 50+ particularly if there has been injury or sustained stress to the knee (e.g. sports, weight bearing occupations). We've put together some information below to help you manage your condition.

Symptoms

Although OA usually progresses, the symptoms do not worsen consistently over time which means that people can enjoy a good quality of life even if they have the condition. Occasional 'flare-ups' can benefit from treatment but if the symptoms become more persistent, a surgical opinion may be necessary. Patients experience pain and stiffness which over time causes loss of movement and weakness of the supporting muscles around the knee.

Things that can help

Essentially, too much activity or too little activity can make the problem worse and it is always advisable to gain expert help from our team of physiotherapists. Here are a few tips which might help.

Knee support a support can help to provide compression and comfort.

Weight loss will reduce pain and improve function. Looking at both diet and exercise is important and, although it can be hard to exercise because of the pain, it really can make a difference.



Physiotherapy is an integral part of successful management - exercise has been shown to reduce pain and improve function and should only be undertaken under the supervision of our physiotherapists. We can also use different techniques to help with pain-relief and recovery of movement.

Medication 'flare ups' are best treated with anti-inflammatory medication and/or painkillers like paracetamol

which can help to relieve pain. It is always advisable to consult your doctor before taking medications.

Ice an ice pack may be used to relieve a painful, swollen knee. They should be applied for periods of 20 minutes every couple of hours (to avoid ice burns to the skin always wrap a thin damp towel around the ice pack).

Injection of the joint is an effective option although not a first line treatment. If other measures have failed to bring the pain under control a steroid injection can have beneficial effects that last several months.

Surgery – key-hole surgery (arthroscopy) can have a significant impact on symptoms if the OA is not too advanced but joint replacement (arthroplasty) is necessary if the pain and disability warrants it.

Exercises will help to improve your condition but we strongly recommend that these are prescribed by a physiotherapist to ensure they are appropriate and specific for you. However, here are a few that most people can manage to get you started...

Exercises



1. Exercise your straight leg by pulling your foot and toes up, tightening your thigh muscle and squeezing the back of your knee against a rolled up towel.



2. Lie on your back. Bend one knee towards your chest, helping with your hands. Keep your other leg on the floor.



3. Place a rolled towel under your ankle. Place an ice pack on your knee. Let the knee straighten.

We can accept no legal liability for any personal injury you may cause yourself by undertaking exercise without assessment and supervision.

The Physios are an experienced team of physiotherapists with two Sheffield practices. Ring us for free advice or to book an appointment on **0114 267 8181**.

We'd like to lend a hand...