A patient’s guide to
physiotherapy exercises
and advice following
distal femoral replacement/
distal femoral diaphyseal replacement
This booklet outlines the likely physiotherapy treatment you will receive whilst in hospital. Although timescales are given, these are approximate and will be different for each patient.

Exercise instructions are included but you must not commence any until taught and instructed to do so by your physiotherapist.

It is important to do your exercises regularly so as to maximise your range of movement and strength. It is not unusual for the exercises to cause some aching or discomfort but if they cause severe pain, please seek advice. Take your pain medication 30 minutes before exercising so it will be most effective in controlling your symptoms.
Day 1 after your operation

The physiotherapist will come and see you the day after your operation to help get you out of bed for the first time.

They will let you know how much weight you are allowed to put on your operated leg.

You will usually use a frame or crutches to stand and walk.

You can start to bend your knee straight away and the physiotherapist will teach you the exercises on the following pages.

Occasionally the surgeon may want you to wear a brace after your operation. Your physiotherapist will let you know if this is the case.
Day 2 onwards

The nurses will assist you in and out of bed for as long as you require assistance, but with practice and exercise you will soon be managing this yourself.

The physiotherapist will gradually help you increase the amount you walk and you may progress to elbow crutches, if you have been using a frame and if it is appropriate for you.

The physiotherapist will also be monitoring the movement in your knee to make sure you are doing the exercises and regaining the movement necessary to allow you to go home.

Bed exercises

1. Lying in bed, take a slow deep breath in, feeling the air going into the bottom of your chest. Hold your breath in for three seconds then breathe out.

Repeat ____ times every hour.
Knee exercises - lying on the bed

2. Lying in bed, squeeze your buttocks firmly together, hold for five seconds then relax.

Repeat ____ times every hour.

3. Lying in bed, bend and straighten your ankles briskly.

Repeat ____ times every hour.
4. Lying in bed with your legs straight, push the back of your knees down against the bed, hold for five seconds then relax.

Repeat _____ times every hour.

5. Place a rolled towel under your knee. Pull your toes towards you and push your knee down onto the towel so your heel lifts off the bed and your knee straightens.

Repeat _____ times.
6. Place a slide board or plastic sheet under your leg. Bend and straighten your knee by sliding your foot up and down the board. You can use a bandage to assist this movement.

Repeat _____ times.

Knee exercises - sitting in a chair

7. With a slide board or plastic sheet under your foot, bend your knee by sliding your heel back under the chair. Hold this position for five seconds then relax and straighten the knee.

Repeat _____ times.
8. Pull your toes towards you whilst tensing the muscle in the front of your thigh, lift your heel off the floor to straighten your knee as much as possible. Hold for five seconds and slowly lower.

Repeat _____ times.

9. Sit with your knee straight and heel resting on a stool to stretch the muscles at the back of the knee.

Sit for _____ minutes.
Standing exercises

10. In a standing position holding on to a solid support, bend your operated leg up in front of you. Hold for 5 slow counts and slowly lower.

Repeat _____ times.
11. In a standing position holding on to a solid support, squeeze your buttocks tightly together and gently bend both knees then straighten.

Repeat _____ times.

12. In a standing position holding on to a solid support, keeping your knees together, bend your operated knee bringing your heel up behind you then lower.

Repeat _____ times.
Going home

Prior to discharge you will need to achieve the following goals:

- Move your knee from 0-90°
- Be independent and safe with your exercises
- Walk safely with the appropriate walking aid
- Climb up and down a step or stairs if appropriate for your home circumstances

On discharge from hospital you will be referred for on-going outpatient physiotherapy at your local hospital, or if you prefer you may be seen for outpatient care by the RNOHT physiotherapy team either at Stanmore or Bolsover Street.
Stairs

Always go up and down one step at a time.
If you have a handrail, then use it and hold your other crutch in your spare hand.

**Ascending stairs:**

- Stand close to the step.
- Step up with your good leg first.
- Then step up with your operated leg onto the same step.
- Lastly, bring up your crutches.
Descending stairs:

- Stand close to the step.
- Place your crutches down first.
- Then place your operated leg down.
- Lastly, place your good leg down onto the same step.
Questions

When can I return to driving?

You will be unable to drive for at least the first six weeks. After this time your physiotherapist or consultant will advise you on whether it is safe to return to driving.

Can I have a shower or bath?

There are no restrictions to bathing. The nurses will inform you when it is safe to get your wound wet. This is usually before you are discharged from hospital.

Can I sleep in any position in bed?

Yes, there are no restrictions in sleeping positions.

When can I return to work/school/college?

This will depend on your job and should be discussed with your physiotherapist and doctor on an individual basis.
**When can I return to exercise?**

To protect your prosthesis from loosening or fractures it is important that you avoid all contact and impact sports.

It may be possible to return to swimming, cycling, Pilates, PE or other hobbies but this should be discussed on an individual basis with your consultant or physiotherapist.

**When is it safe to resume sexual relations?**

Unless you find it painful, or your doctor advises you otherwise, it is safe to continue sexual relations with your partner. Generally a comfortable and safe position for both men and women is to be on their backs underneath their partner. If you wish to discuss this further, please speak to your physiotherapist.
If you have any comments about this leaflet or would like it translated into another language/large print, please contact the Clinical Governance Department on 020 8909 5439/5717.

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