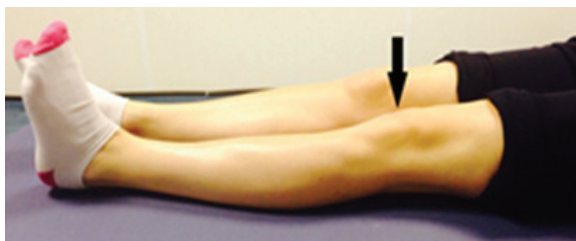


Dislocation of your patella (kneecap) follow up

Physiotherapy

Patient information



What is this information about?

This information is about dislocations of your kneecap (patella).

It tells you:

- How to look after yourself when you go home from hospital with a kneecap dislocation.
- What exercises you can do to help heal and strengthen your leg.
- What follow-up treatment you might have.
- Who to contact if you need further help and support.

What is a kneecap dislocation?

A kneecap dislocation occurs when the kneecap (patella) moves out of place.

How long is it likely to take for my injury to heal?

It usually takes around six to twelve weeks for a kneecap dislocation to heal. Some people may need to continue with exercise for several months to get back to their usual activities.

Will smoking or vaping slow down my healing?

Yes. Smoking slows healing so if you smoke or vape try to stop or cut down. This is most important in the first two weeks after your injury. If you would like help to stop smoking talk to your GP or visit **Quit smoking** – [NHS www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/) for further information.

What should I do if I am in pain after my kneecap dislocation?

If you are in pain, take your usual pain killers or pain killers given to you in the emergency department. Follow the dose instructions on the packet. If you are struggling with pain, speak to your GP or pharmacist.

Will I have a cast or splint after I have a kneecap dislocation?

Most people will have a cricket pad splint (designed to support your knee and keep it straight) and crutches. If you can walk without the splint, you do not need to keep wearing it.

What should I do to care for myself if I have a splint?

Do

- ✓ Wear it to support your walking for the first week if you need this.
- ✓ The exercises which are shown later in this leaflet.
- ✓ Check your skin under the splint to make sure it is not being damaged.

Do not

- ✗ Use anything to scratch yourself under the splint.
- ✗ Trim or cut down the splint.
- ✗ Wear it at night, unless this makes you more comfortable.

What should I do if I am struggling with my splint?

Contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic. We can give you advice or arrange for your splint to be changed if you need that.

Will I have further (follow up) appointments?

Yes. You will be referred to a knee specialist in about 2 weeks. If you need physiotherapy they will organise this.

You will be sent an appointment time and date by post, or you will get a phone call if it is close to the appointment date.

What should I do in the first and second week after my injury?

- Try to rest your leg for the first 24 to 72 hours. However, it is important to maintain movement in your knee. Gently move your knee following the exercises shown. These should not cause too much pain. This will ensure your knee does not become stiff and it will help the healing process.
- You may walk on your leg as comfort allows. Use the crutches and/or the splint if supplied but stop using them as soon as you feel able.
- Walk on your injured leg (with or without crutches) with as much weight as your pain allows you. Try to walk as normally as possible as this will help with your recovery. It is usually easier to put both crutches out in front of you and then lead with your affected leg, followed by your other leg.
- A cold pack (ice pack or frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel) can provide short term pain relief. Apply this to the sore area for up to 15 minutes, every few hours. The ice must never be in direct contact with the skin.

- Raise your ankle above the level of your hips to reduce swelling. You can use pillows or a stool to keep your foot up.
- It is important to start gentle exercises straight away to prevent stiffness, get the muscles that support your knee working and help the healing process. You will find pictures and instructions for your exercises over the page.

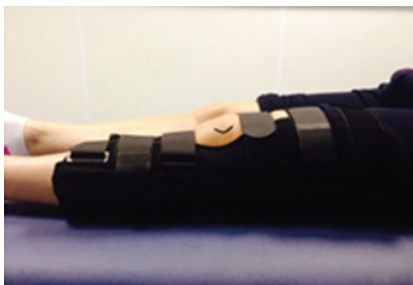
How do I fit my splint?

Place the cricket pad splint on the injured leg so that your kneecap (patella) is in the middle hole of the splint, as shown below.

You may need to adjust its position during the day as it can slip down the leg.

Whilst your knee is in this splint it is **very important** to do the thigh exercises to keep your muscles strong.

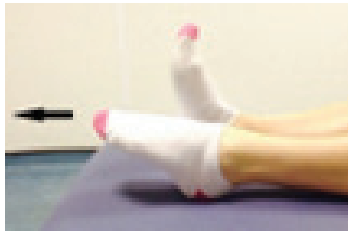
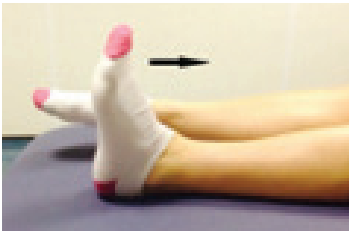
You should try to remove the splint within a week from your injury and try to walk without the crutches as soon as possible.



What exercises should I start with?

Ankle movement:

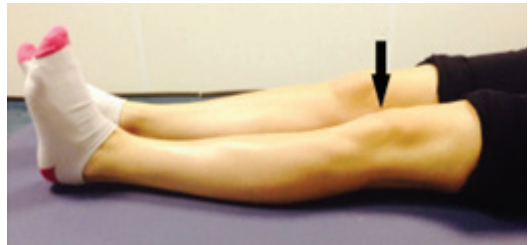
Point your foot up and down. **Repeat 10 times.**



Thigh squeezes:

With the leg straight and supported, gently squeeze your thigh muscle and try to straighten your knee further.

Hold for 10 seconds
and repeat 7-10 times.



Knee movement:

Gently bend and straighten your injured knee as pain allows, only going as far as you feel comfortable. **Repeat 7-10 times.**



What should I be doing from week two after my injury?

You will be reviewed in fracture clinic to further assess and guide you with your recovery. They may refer you to physiotherapy at this time.

What other things can the Virtual Fracture Clinic help me with?

Please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic if you:

- Are concerned about your symptoms.
- Are struggling to return to exercise or your usual activities.
- Would like further information or support after you have read this information.

When can I start driving?

You can return to driving when:

- You can walk comfortably.
- You can safely deal with all emergency situations without being in pain or hesitating. For example, you must be able to stop the car quickly and in full control and safely avoid obstacles.
- You are covered by your insurance company.

Be aware

Always try driving in a safe place first.

How can I get a certificate for work?

You can get a fitness for work statement from the virtual fracture clinic.

How do I contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic?

Virtual Fracture Clinics

We aim to respond to messages within 24 hours during these times. At times you may receive a call outside of these hours.

Worthing

01903 205111 Ext. 86312

St Richards

01243 788122 Ext. 35503

Email uhsussex.vfc@nhs.net

Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

This information is intended for patients receiving care in Worthing and St.Richard's hospital Chichester.

Ref. number: 2477

Publication date: 02/2025

Review date: 02/2028

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