



**University
Hospitals Sussex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Hinged knee brace

Patient information

What is this information about?

This information is about wearing a hinged knee brace.

It explains:

- What a knee brace is.
- Why you may need to wear a knee brace.
- About your follow up appointment.
- When you should and should not wear your brace.
- What you should and should not do during the time you have your hinged knee brace.
- How you should exercise while you have your knee brace.

Why have I been given this information?

You have been given this information because you have had a knee injury. We would like you to wear a hinged knee brace while you are waiting for your clinic appointment with a knee specialist. Following the advice in this information and doing the exercises can:

- Help your knee to recover.
- Help you to stay safe and healthy while you are wearing your brace.

What is a hinged knee brace?

A hinged knee brace is a knee support that has hinges. These allow your injured knee to move in a limited and controlled way.

The brace:

- Supports your knee ligaments.
- Provides stability to your injured knee.



Why do I need to wear this brace?

Wearing the brace supports your knee and gives it a good chance to heal. You may also feel that your knee is more stable when you are wearing the brace.

Will I still have a review (follow-up appointment) with a knee specialist?

Yes, your follow up appointment will go ahead as planned. Please inform us if you have not received an appointment letter.

Am I allowed to let my injured leg take some or all of my body weight (put weight through my leg)?

Yes. You can do things such as standing or stepping up that put weight through your leg as you are able to, unless the Virtual Fracture Clinic gives you different advice.

You do not need to use your crutches unless you feel you need to.

How long do I need to wear the brace for?

Do

- ✓ Wear the brace until you see the specialist in clinic. They will tell you at your appointment whether you need to continue wearing the brace or not.

When do I need to wear the brace?

Do

- ✓ Wear the brace all day, including in bed at night. You can take it off to wash and dress only. Wear your brace directly over your skin with no clothing underneath it.

How do I fit my brace?

The brace has been set so that you can move your knee the right amount. The fracture clinic will set how much the brace will move.

Be aware Do not re-adjust the settings.

Make sure the brace fits correctly. The dials of the brace should be at the side of your knee, in line with the knee cap.

Can I drive whilst wearing a brace?

We advise you do not drive whilst wearing a brace as it may limit the movement of your leg. You can return to driving once:

- Your knee specialist or fracture clinic have told you that you no longer need to use the brace.
- You can do an emergency stop without having any pain.

If you have an automatic car and you are wearing your brace on your left leg, you may be able to drive if:

- Your leg fits into the footwell of the car with your brace on.
- You let your insurance company know.

How should I wash my leg and care for my skin while I have my brace?

- Take your brace off to wash your leg.
- Make sure you dry your skin well after you have washed your leg.
- Check the skin under and around your brace to see if it looks red (this may look differently in black or brown skin) or damaged.

Be aware

If you notice redness or damage to your skin **do** inform the Virtual Fracture Clinic as soon as possible.

What exercises should I do while I am wearing my brace?

It is important to do exercises while you are wearing your brace to:

- Keep your knee moving.
- Prevent stiffness.
- Help your blood to circulate.

Do

- ✓ Keep your brace on while you are doing the exercises.

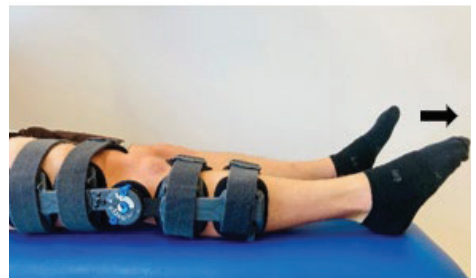
Do these exercises 3 to 4 times a day. Be guided by your pain.

Ankle exercises

Lie with your leg supported and straight.

Point your foot up and down.

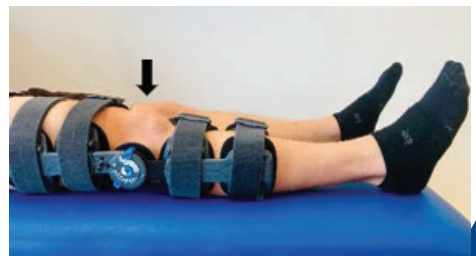
Repeat this 10 times.



Thigh muscle exercise

Lie with your leg supported and straight. Gently tense the muscles in your thigh and try to straighten your knee further.

Hold for 5 seconds and repeat 7 to 10 times.



Bend and straighten your leg

Lie with your legs supported and straight.

Bend and straighten your injured leg. Go as far as you feel comfortable.

Repeat 7 to 10 times.



Do

✓ Try to get your knee fully straight.

Thigh strengthening (quads muscle) exercise

Place a rolled-up towel or small pillow under your injured knee.

Tense your thigh muscle and try to straighten your knee. Keep the back of your knee in contact with the towel or pillow.

Repeat 10 times. If you can, try to hold your knee straight for 5 seconds.



Who do I contact if I have any problems with my brace?

Please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic.

We prefer you to contact us by email.

Email: uhsussex.fracturecare@nhs.net

Phone: 01273 696955 Ext. 63428.

If you contact us by phone, please leave a message.

Office hours are 8am to 4.15pm, Monday to Friday.

If you email or leave a message, we aim to reply within 2 working days.

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in Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath**

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