

Body Language

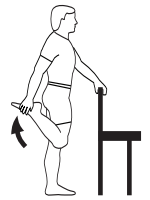
A Ten Minute Guide to Stronger Knees

Welcome to O'Connor Hospital! We are dedicated to providing comprehensive, excellent healthcare that is attentive to the whole person: body, mind and spirit. Understanding how your body works and learning to "listen" to your body helps you stay active and reduce injuries. The Body Language courses are designed to assist you in this process. Following are a series of exercises that teach you the basics of good body biomechanics for your knees.

There are hundreds of different exercises that can be used to strengthen and improve the flexibility of the knees. The following exercises have been selected because they are effective, easy to do and focus on important muscular structures. This exercise routine will take about ten minutes to complete. A brief walk is a good warm up. Daily use of this program, even when your knees feel good will help to keep them healthy and strong. Regular physical activity is recommended to compliment this knee care program. As you do these exercises you will feel some stretching, but it should not be painful. If you are experiencing pain, check with your physician or therapist before continuing to do the exercises.

Quadriceps Stretch

Stand behind the chair or table for support. Bend one leg back and grasp the top of the foot until you feel a stretch in the front of your thighs. Hold this position for 20-30 seconds and repeat several times. Perform the same exercise with the other leg.



Standing Hamstring

Place one foot up on a step stool or low chair keeping the knee straight up and toes pointing up. Slowly bend at the hips until you feel a stretch at the back of the thighs. Hold the position for 20-30 seconds. Repeat several times and then stretch the other leg.



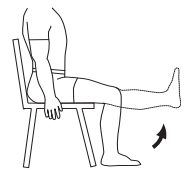
Hip Flexor Stretch

Assume a half kneeling position on the floor or mat. Slowly lean the whole body toward the front leg until you feel a stretch at the front of the thigh and hip. Hold this position for 20-30 seconds and repeat several times.



Long Arc Quads

Sitting on a chair, slowly lift one leg up to straighten the knee while keeping the back straight. Hold the position 2-3 seconds and start with 10-15 repetitions. Repeat with the other leg and increase the number of repetitions as the knees get stronger.



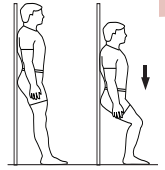
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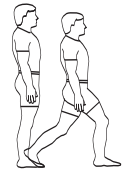
Wall Squats

Flatten your back against the wall, keeping the stomach muscles tight and the feet away from the wall, shoulder width apart. Slowly slide your back down bending the knees until halfway to a sitting position. Hold this position for 2-3 seconds and then slide up to the starting position, keeping the back against the wall. Slide down further as the knees get stronger.



Lunges

Keeping your back straight, step forward with one leg and slowly bend the knee putting most of the body weight onto the front leg. Hold this position for 2-3 seconds and start with 10-15 repetitions. Repeat with the other leg.



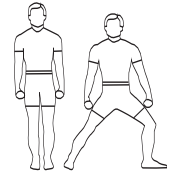
Variations:

Traveling Lunges

Walk forward and/or backwards while performing this exercise.

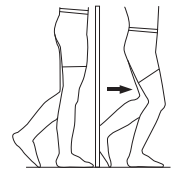
Side Lunges

1. Step sideways to the right and slowly bend the knees putting most of the weight on the right leg. Repeat with the other leg.
2. Walk sideways while performing this exercise.



Unilateral Squats

Stand behind a chair or table for support. Stand on one leg with the knee and toes pointing forward. Slowly bend the knee keeping the hip, knee and ankle in a straight line. Hold this position 2-3 seconds and start with 10-15 repetitions. Repeat this exercise with the other leg. Gradually increase the number of repetitions as you get stronger.



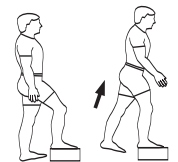
Hip/Thigh Abduction

Stand behind a chair or table for support. Using a theraband tied around the ankle, slowly lift one leg out to the side keeping the trunk straight and knees and foot pointing forward. Start with 10-15 repetitions and repeat with the other leg. Gradually increase the number of repetitions as you get stronger.



Step-Ups

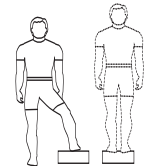
Step forward onto a step stool or the bottom of the stairs keeping the back straight. Follow with the other leg. Carefully step down with the leading foot first. Repeat this exercise with the other leg leading. Start with 10-15 repetitions and gradually increase as the knees get stronger.



Variation:

Lateral Step-Ups

Step sideways onto a step stool or stair step.



From 101: Take 101 to 880 South. Take the Bascom Avenue exit. Turn left on Bascom. Turn right on Naglee (which becomes Forest). The hospital is located at 2105 Forest Avenue.

From 280 North: Take 280 to 880 North. Take the West San Carlos exit. Turn left on Di Salvo and you will see the hospital, which is located at 2105 Forest Avenue.

From 280 South: Take 280 to 880 North. Take the Bascom Avenue South exit. Turn right on Naglee (which becomes Forest). The hospital is located at 2105 Forest Avenue.

Parking: Long-term parking is available behind the hospital. Short-term parking is available in front of the hospital. Free valet parking is available for our guests.

Bus Routes: Lines 23 and 36

