

Patient Information Sheet

Acute Knee Injury

What do I need to know?

What is my diagnosis?

You have a soft tissue injury to your knee. An X-ray has been taken and will have shown that the bones are **not broken**. Your knee may be swollen and painful, and you may have been given crutches and sometimes a knee support.

Most soft tissue knee injuries get better by themselves, but sometimes further assessment is needed.



What happens next?

- Your X-rays and notes will be checked by a Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon
- You will either be **contacted by phone with the offer of an appointment with a knee surgeon or physiotherapist**
- Knee examination can be sore, so clinic appointments are offered 2 weeks after injury to allow some of the pain and swelling to reduce.
- Please make sure the Emergency Department/Minor Injury Unit reception staff have your mobile and home phone numbers

What can I expect during my recovery?

- Most knee injuries begin to get better after a few weeks
- **Unless you have been instructed to wear a splint all the time** – you should take it off as soon as you feel able to allow movement and avoid stiffness
- Unless instructed otherwise by the staff in the Emergency Department, you are **allowed to put weight through your knee**
- Crutches may have been provided and these should be used to help you balance
- Try to ice the knee 2 to 3 times a day for 15 minutes for the first week
- Try to perform the exercises on the next page once the pain has improved.
- There is **no specific time you can drive again**. It is **illegal** to drive when wearing a sling, splint, cast, or moonboot. As you recover, it is your legal responsibility to be certain before you return to driving that you are able to control your vehicle normally and safely.

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Key exercises (3 times a day)

Knee bending and straightening

- As soon as you can, begin to bend your knee up and down
- This may be uncomfortable at first but gently working on the range of movement will help reduce swelling and speed up recovery
- If you find this movement too difficult – **don't push it** – rest and wait until you are contacted by the Orthopaedic Department.

Get in touch

Please get in touch via our trauma email if you have queries about your injury:

traumaenquiriesRIE@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

If you do not receive a reply after 3 working days call our Monday-Friday helpline (8am-4pm):
0131 242 3410

Urgent issues

Please call the department where you were initially seen about your injury:

- **RIE Minor Injuries Unit:** 0131 242 3942 (8am- midnight, if after midnight contact RIE Emergency Department 0131 242 1300)
- **WGH Minor Injuries Clinic:** 0131 536 3468 (9am-8:30pm)
- **SJH Emergency Department:** 01506 523 011 (24 hours)