BaylorScott&White
ORTHOPEDIC ASSOCIATES OF DALLAS
A member of HealthTexas Provider Network

Manoj P. Reddy, MD
Sports Medicine & Shoulder Surgery
Orthopedic Associates of Dallas
469.800.7200 office | 469.800.7210 fax
DallasOrtho.com | ReddyOrtho.com

Knee Osteoarthritis

HOME EXERCISE PROGRAM

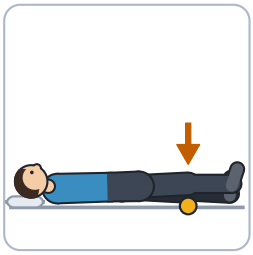
Knee osteoarthritis is wear of the cartilage that lines the joint. Exercise is one of the most effective treatments: stronger thigh and hip muscles reduce pain, improve walking and protect the joint. It is safe to exercise with arthritis.

How to do this program

- Pain rule: mild discomfort up to 3 out of 10 during exercise is okay if it settles by the next morning. Stop any exercise that causes sharp pain.
- Move slowly and with control. Breathe normally; do not hold your breath.
- Do the exercises at least 3-4 days a week; daily is best for Phase 1.
- Add Phase 2 after 1-2 weeks, or when Phase 1 feels easy.
- Pair this program with 20-30 minutes of low-impact activity (walking, cycling, swimming) most days.

Phase 1 · Motion and muscle activation (weeks 0-2)

Keep the knee moving and switch on the thigh muscle.



1. Quad Set

Lie with the leg straight and a small towel under the knee. Tighten the thigh to press the back of the knee down. Hold 5 seconds.

Make it harder: *Do it sitting with the heel propped on a stool.*

15 reps · 2-3 times a day

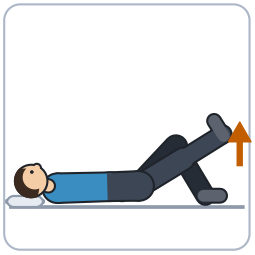


2. Heel Slide

Lie on your back. Slowly slide your heel toward your buttock to bend the knee as far as is comfortable, then straighten fully.

Make it harder: *Pull gently on a towel around the foot for extra bend.*

2 sets of 15 · 2 times a day



3. Straight-Leg Raise

Bend the other knee. Tighten the thigh of the straight leg first, then lift it to the height of the other knee. Lower slowly.

Make it harder: *Add a 1-3 lb ankle weight.*

3 sets of 10 · once a day



4. Hamstring Stretch

Sit at the edge of a chair with the leg straight and heel on the floor. Keep your back straight and lean forward from the hips until you feel a stretch.

Hold 30 sec · 3 reps · 2 times a day



5. Seated Knee Extension

Sit tall in a chair. Straighten the knee fully and hold 3 seconds, then lower slowly.

Make it harder: *Add a 1-3 lb ankle weight.*

3 sets of 10 · once a day

This program is a guideline. Your doctor or therapist may adjust it based on your condition and progress.
Call the office for fever, wound drainage, calf pain or swelling, or new numbness or tingling.

Questions: 469.800.7200
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Phase 2 · Strength and function (weeks 2-12, then ongoing)

Keep doing the knee extension daily and add these exercises 3-4 days a week.

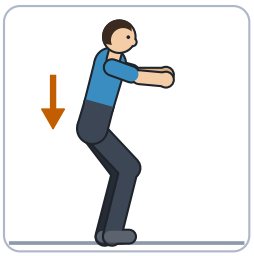


6. Sit to Stand

Sit on a firm chair. Lean forward and stand up without using your hands if you can, then sit back down slowly.

Make it harder: *Use a lower chair or hold a weight at your chest.*

3 sets of 10 · once a day



7. Mini Squat

Hold a counter if needed. Push your hips back and bend the knees partway, keeping the knees over your toes. Stand back up.

Make it harder: *Squat a little deeper, but not past 90°.*

3 sets of 10 · once a day



8. Step-Up

Step up onto a 4-6 inch step with the sore leg, then step down slowly. Keep the knee in line with your foot.

Make it harder: *Use a higher step or hold light weights.*

3 sets of 10 · once a day

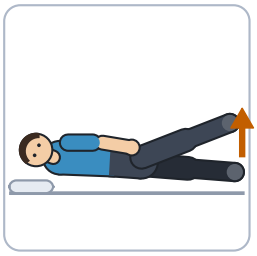


9. Clamshell

Lie on your side with knees bent. Keeping your feet together, lift the top knee, then lower slowly. Do both sides.

Make it harder: *Add a band around the thighs.*

3 sets of 12 · once a day

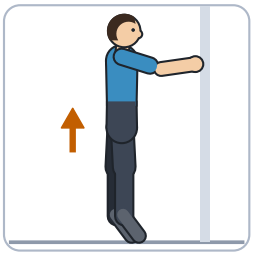


10. Side-Lying Leg Lift

Lie on your side with the bottom knee bent. Keep the top leg straight and lift it toward the ceiling, slightly behind you. Lower slowly.

Make it harder: *Add a 1-3 lb ankle weight.*

3 sets of 12 · once a day



11. Calf Raise

Stand holding a wall or counter. Rise up onto your toes, then lower slowly.

Make it harder: *Do it on one leg.*

3 sets of 15 · once a day

Everyday tips

- A flare after a busy day is normal. Cut the reps in half for 2-3 days, then build back up.
- Supportive shoes and a cane in the opposite hand can ease pain when walking.
- Each pound of weight lost takes about 4 pounds of pressure off the knee.

Call the office if

- The knee becomes hot, red or very swollen.
- You have new locking or giving way.
- Pain stops you from walking or sleeping despite the program.