

You have an

Undisplaced Patella Fracture

This is a break to your knee cap.

Healing:

It can take approximately 6 weeks for this fracture to heal.

Smoking will slow down your healing. We would advise that you stop smoking while your fracture heals. Talk to your GP or go to www.smokefree.nhs.uk for more information.

Pain and swelling:

Your knee will be swollen and you will have some pain. Swelling is often worse at the end of the day. Taking pain medication, elevating your knee and using ice or cold packs will help. More information is on the next page.

It is normal to have mild pain and swelling for 3-6 months.

Walking and your brace:

You will normally be fitted with a knee brace or plaster cast before you leave the Emergency Department.

The knee brace must be worn day and night. You can only take it off to wash or use a cold pack, but you must keep your leg supported and your knee straight and replace the brace when you are finished.

You are allowed to put weight through your foot. You may find it easier to use crutches in the early stages.



Exercises:

It is important to start exercises as soon as possible. Instructions are on the next page.

Follow up: Your fracture is in a satisfactory position therefore no appointments in the fracture clinic are usually required. We are referring you to physiotherapy for rehabilitation and they will contact you directly.

Any questions:

If you are concerned about your symptoms, unable to follow this rehabilitation plan or have pain other than at your knee, please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic team.



Caring for your injury: Weeks 1 and 2

Remember to wear your brace. This video provides you with a guide for fitting your brace:

<https://vimeo.com/386673392>

Using a cold pack will help with your pain and swelling. You can use an ice pack or bag of frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel. Put this on your knee for up to 15 minutes every few hours. Make sure the ice is not in direct contact with your skin.

Try to rest your knee, especially in the first 24-72 hours. Raise your leg on a stool or cushions so that it is above the level of your hip. This will help to reduce your swelling.

Exercises:

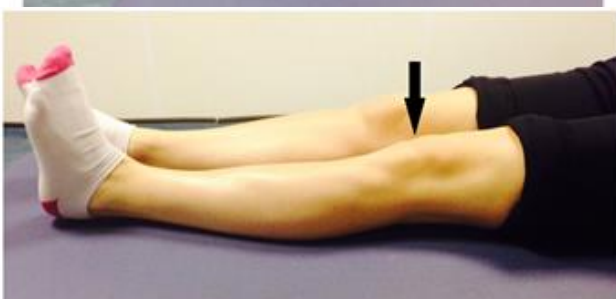
Early movement of the ankle and foot is important to promote circulation and reduce the risk of developing a Deep Vein Thrombosis (blood clot).

Do these exercises 3-4 times a day. Start straight away, you do not need to push into pain.



Ankle Exercises

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



Static Quadriceps Exercise

Rest 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 7-10 times.



Caring for your injury: Week 3-6

Your brace will be changed to a hinged knee brace. For the first three weeks your knee was kept straight. The hinged knee brace can be adjusted to allow a set amount of movement in your knee.



You will be shown how to adjust your brace to allow movement. This is done by changing the dial on either side of the brace. For example, this picture shows the brace set to allow a 30 degree bend (flexion) of the knee. If you need help with your brace please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic.



You will be asked to gradually increase your movement using the timetable below:

Weeks 1 and 2 after injury	Knee straight
Weeks 3 and 4 after injury	0-30 degrees
Weeks 5 and 6 after injury	0-60 degrees
Week 7 and 8 after injury	0-90 degrees
Week 9 onwards	Remove the brace

Exercises:

From three weeks after the injury, you can start bending your knee with your brace on. Only bend the knee as far as the brace allows.



Bend and straighten your knee 10 times. Repeat this 4-5 times a day.



Frequently Asked Questions

I am struggling with my brace. What do I do?

Please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic.

When can I start driving?

You can return to driving when:

- You are no longer using your brace
- You can walk comfortably
- You can perform an emergency stop pain free

Always test your ability to drive in a safe environment first.

How can I get a certificate for work?

You can get a fitness for work statement by contacting your GP.

What do I do with my brace and crutches when I no longer need them?

We are not able to use the brace again. These should not be returned to the hospital.

Crutches can be returned to Orthopaedic Outpatients, a Minor Injuries Unit or Emergency Department.

How do I contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic?

Call 01305 253305

Email VFCTriage@dchft.nhs.uk