

Physiotherapy Department

Attending the total knee replacement (TKR) class

This leaflet explains more about the total knee replacement (TKR) class at St Thomas' Hospital.

If you have any further questions, please speak to the physiotherapist caring for you.

What is the TKR class?

Physiotherapy is vital to your recovery following your TKR. The TKR class is a physiotherapy-led exercise class, specifically designed for people who have recently had a TKR. The class aims to improve your knee strength, range of movement, balance, knee control and function.

The TKR class runs for a period of six weeks, with each class lasting approximately one hour. You will attend the class once a week for the duration of the six weeks. On your first session you will be asked to attend at 9.45am on a Wednesday so that you can be assessed by the physiotherapist following your operation. This session will include some tests to look at your knee mobility, muscle strength and walking ability, as well as discussing any problems you may have had since leaving hospital. Your physiotherapist will also help you to identify any specific goals you might have.

You will attend the class once a week, on Wednesdays. You will begin by attending the Early Class, which starts at 10.15am. When you are ready, you will progress to the Advanced Class, which starts at 11.15am on Wednesdays. At the end of the six weeks, we will do the tests again to assess the progress you have made.

What does the TKR class involve?

The class begins with gentle warm up exercises led by a member of the physiotherapy team. After the warm up, you will complete an exercise circuit where you can exercise at your own pace. The class then finishes with a gentle cool down and some stretches.

You may have increased swelling and soreness after your first few classes – this is normal after a TKR operation when exercising. The information on the next page may help you to manage this.

Swelling: To reduce swelling in your operated leg, you should rest with your leg elevated (raised) for an hour at a time, for regular intervals throughout the day. Use pillows or cushions to ensure your foot is above the level of your knee and your knee is above the level of your hip. When resting your leg, make sure that the knee is in a straight position. Do not be tempted to put pillows under your knee to make it more comfortable. Use your cryocuff (cool pack), that you were given in hospital, for 15-20 minutes, three or four times a day.

Pain: It is important to keep your pain well controlled as this will allow you to move around and complete your exercises. If your pain is not controlled, it may delay your progress and recovery. Therefore, if you need to, please continue to take your pain medication, or seek advice from your GP if your pain medication is not working for you.

Do I do the exercises at home?

To get the maximum benefit from the class, it is important that you also complete the exercises at home. The exercises in the class are designed so that this is possible.

Who can use the service?

The service is available to all patients who have undergone a TKR at Guy's hospital. The physiotherapist treating you will refer you to the class.

Where do I need to go?

The class takes place in the **physiotherapy outpatient gym, third floor, Lambeth Wing, St Thomas' Hospital.**

Does it cost anything?

The class is free for NHS patients.

What should I wear?

Please wear loose clothing and comfortable flat shoes for the class. Shorts or wide trousers are preferable. If you have any special requirements, please discuss these with the physiotherapists before the class. Single sex changing facilities are available.

What do I need to bring with me?

If you use an inhaler, GTN spray or other medication, please bring these with you and inform the physiotherapist that you may need to stop and use these. Water is provided for you in the class.

What if I am unable to attend?

If you are unable to attend your class, then please inform one of the class physiotherapists on **020 7188 5108 during class times** (10.15am-12.15pm) or phone the physiotherapy outpatient reception on 020 7188 5103. If you miss more than two sessions without notifying the department then you may be discharged from the class.

Useful information

Hospital transport

If you are eligible for hospital transport, and are using this service to attend the class, please book your transport to arrive half an hour before the class is due to start, to make sure that you arrive in plenty of time. If you arrive via hospital transport then a porter should be able to take you to the class. We do encourage people to walk back to transport after the class as part of regaining independence. If you need assistance or are unable to do this then please let us know.

The telephone number for hospital transport is 020 7188 2888.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about the TKR class, please contact the Physiotherapy Outpatient Department on 020 7188 5099 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm).

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) – To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or: **t:** 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas' **t:** 020 7188 8803 at Guy's **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

Knowledge & Information Centre (KIC) – For more information about health conditions, support groups and local services, or to search the internet and send emails, please visit the KIC on the Ground Floor, North Wing, St Thomas' Hospital.
t: 020 7188 3416

Language support services – If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.
t: 020 7188 8815 **fax:** 020 7188 5953

NHS Direct – Offers health information and advice from specially trained nurses over the phone 24 hours a day.
t: 0845 4647 **w:** www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

NHS Choices – Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.
w: www.nhs.uk

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To join, please call 0848 143 4017, email members@gstt.nhs.uk or visit www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk

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