

Knee Pain – Talking about your care options

You went to the doctor with knee pain. They have said that you have osteoarthritis of the knee. So, read this leaflet to find out what you can do.

The first steps are to become as fit as possible and get to our ideal weight. Think about trying treatments which do not involve an operation, for example taking painkillers, doing more exercise or having physiotherapy.

Think about what you need, what you enjoy doing and how you live. You can try different treatments and some may help you more than others.

Below are questions you might want to ask about the different treatments you can try.		
Questions	Lifestyle and weight loss	Painkillers
Will I have less pain?	If you lose weight and get more active, it is likely that you will have less pain. It may be uncomfortable at first but if you take painkillers before you exercise then this will help.	Tablets like paracetamol and ibuprofen, will help some people with their pain.
Will I be able to do more?	Yes as you become more active you are likely to have less pain and better movement in your knee.	As you take painkillers you should be able to do more and this can help reduce pain further. It may help to take the painkillers before exercising.
Are there any risks?	Losing weight sensibly and doing more exercise has shown to be safe if you have osteoarthritis of the knee. Try an exercise where you can build up your strength like walking.	Side effects are rare but as with any medicine there may be some. For example codeine may lead to constipation and anti-inflammatories like ibuprofen can increase your risk of stomach bleeding.
How long will it take until I feel better?	As you do more exercise and lose weight you should start to feel the pain gets much less. If this doesn't happen then it's time to look at other treatments.	You'll probably start feeling relief within a few days. If you don't then it's time to look at other treatments.
What else can I do?	<p>Physiotherapy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you've tried all the above and things don't feel better then talk to your doctor again. You may be able to get some physiotherapy. <p>Knee replacement operation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An operation is usually for people who have tried other treatments first. For advanced arthritis, a knee replacement operation may be an option but it doesn't suit everybody and it is major surgery that carries risks. The risks are wound infection (five in 100 people), joint infection (one in 100 people), blood clots (two in 100 people). A full recovery can take up to six months. To understand a bit more talk to your doctor or there are some great web resources like www.arthritisresearchuk.org or the Patient Decision Aids below. 	

Once you have made your decision please complete the below form and return to your GP Practice.

Name: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____ **Doctor:** _____ **Date completed:** _____

Do you feel SURE about the choice for you? **Yes / No** Do you know the benefits and risks of each option? **Yes/ No**

Are you clear about which benefits and risks matter most to you? **Yes / No**

Do you have enough support and advice to make a choice? **Yes / No**

Which options have you chosen? **Painkillers / Steroid injection / Lifestyle changes / Physiotherapy / Surgery**

How satisfied are you with this decision? **1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10**

