

Compliments, comments & complaints

If you'd like to compliment, comment or complain about our service please contact our Customer Services Department:

Customer Services Department

Livewell Southwest
Room AF3, Local Care Centre
200 Mount Gould Road
Plymouth
PL4 7PY

Tel: 01752 435201

Email: customerservicespch@nhs.net

Contact details

The Minor Injuries Units are open every day of the year, including Bank Holidays.

Minor Injuries Unit Cumberland Centre

Damerel Close
Plymouth
PL1 4JZ

Tel: 01752 434390

Opening times: 8:30am - 9pm

Minor Injuries Unit South Hams Hospital

Plymouth Road
Kingsbridge
TQ7 1AT

Tel: 01548 852349

Opening times: 9am - 5pm

Minor Injuries Unit Tavistock Hospital

Spring Hill
Tavistock
PL19 8LD

Tel: 01822 612233

Opening times: 8am - 10pm

www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk

 Livewell Southwest

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Knee Injuries Advice Leaflet



Minor Injuries Unit

Cumberland Centre
South Hams Hospital
Tavistock Hospital

R.I.C.E.

You will have been informed by the Practitioner that you have a soft tissue injury (muscle, ligament, cartilage or tendon) to your knee.

After a knee injury it is important to reduce the pain and swelling and gradually return to normal movement and activities. The first stage of inflammation can last up to 2 weeks. To help you manage your symptoms, use RICE:

REST the knee joint for 48 - 72 hours following injury.

ICE should be applied as soon as possible after the injury for 10 - 30 minutes. Less than 10 minutes may have little effect. More than 30 minutes may cause damage to the skin. Make an ice pack by wrapping ice cubes in a plastic bag or towel (do not put ice directly onto skin as it may cause an ice burn). A bag of frozen peas is an alternative. Gently press the ice pack onto the injured part. The cold from the ice is thought to reduce blood flow to the damaged ligament / muscle. This may limit pain and inflammation. After the first application, some doctors recommend reapplying ice for 10 minutes every 2 hours (during the day) for the first 48 - 72 hours. Do not leave ice on while asleep.

COMPRESSION with a bandage may help if there is lots of swelling. A tubular compression bandage may be given but should be removed at night by easing it off gradually. Put on again before you get out of bed in the morning. Mild pressure that is not too uncomfortable or tight, and does not stop blood flow, is ideal.

Depending on the amount of swelling you may be advised to remove the bandage. This is because the bandage may limit movement of the joint which should normally be moving more freely after this time. However, bandages are sometimes kept on for longer to help keep swelling down and to keep the joint more comfortable.

ELEVATION aims to limit and reduce swelling. For example, keep the leg up on a chair to at least hip level when you are sitting. It may be easier to lie on a sofa and to put your knee on some cushions. When you are in bed, put your knee on a pillow.

You may or may not have been lent a pair of crutches. If so, **please return your crutches to the MIU before 5pm on:**

If you still need these crutches, please telephone the MIU Receptionist on the telephone numbers on the back of this leaflet to arrange for a longer loan period.

If you have been offered an appointment to be reviewed, your clinic appointment is:

Do no HARM for 72 hours after injury

Heat: Heat should be avoided when inflammation is developing as heat encourages blood flow. After 72 hours you may use heat, which can then be soothing.

Alcohol: Avoid as this can increase bleeding and swelling, and decrease healing.

Running / sport: May cause further damage.

Massage: May increase bleeding and swelling but, as with heat, massage may be beneficial after 72 hours.

Should I take painkillers?

Try whichever painkillers you would normally take for a headache. If you follow the advice in this leaflet the pain should begin to ease, but it may take a while. You may not be walking on your leg properly for a couple of weeks.

Should I exercise my knee?

After the first couple of days of RICE you may begin to exercise it - this may be painful at first.

Follow the exercises in the leaflet that the Practitioner has given you along with this leaflet. As soon as possible you should try to walk properly wearing good supportive shoes - not high heels, sandals / dolly shoes or flip flops.

Avoid any strenuous walking, running or sport until you can do all the exercises without pain - it may take 4 - 6 weeks.

Remember it may take a couple of weeks for the pain to disappear. If there is no improvement within this time please return to the MIU or your GP.