

Exercises for Achy Knees (At-Home Physical Therapy)

How to Use This Program:

Complete this routine once per day, every day unless pain increases. Exercises should stay at or below 3/10 discomfort and should not worsen symptoms afterward.

Stretching Exercises

1. Hamstring Stretch (with Strap)

Dosage:

- Hold 20 seconds
- Repeat 5 times

How to Do It:

- Lie on your back with your leg straight
- Loop a strap around your foot and lift your leg upward
- Stop when you feel a stretch in the back of your thigh

2. Prone Quadriceps Stretch

Dosage:

- Hold 10 seconds
- Repeat 10 times

How to Do It:

- Lie on your stomach with a strap around your foot
- Gently pull your heel toward your buttocks until you feel a stretch in the front of your thigh
- Relax and return to the starting position

3. Calf Stretch on Slant Board (Gastroc Wedge)

Dosage:

- Hold 20 seconds
- Repeat 5 times

How to Do It:

- Place both feet on the slant board with heels down
- Keep knees straight and lean your body forward
- Hold the stretch in your calves

Strengthening Exercises

4. Straight Leg Raise (SLR)

Dosage:

- 10 repetitions
- 2 sets

How to Do It:

- Lie on your back with one leg straight and the other bent
- Tighten your thigh and lift the straight leg to the height of your opposite knee
- Lower slowly and repeat

5. Short Arc Quad (SAQ)

Dosage:

- 20 repetitions
- 2 sets

How to Do It:

- Place a foam roll under your knee
- Straighten your leg to lift your foot off the floor
- Lower slowly and repeat

6. Long Arc Quad (LAQ)

Dosage:

- 20 repetitions
- 2 sets

How to Do It:

- Sit with your thigh supported
- Straighten your leg fully, then lower slowly
- Repeat

7. Bridges with Resistance Band

Dosage:

- Hold 3 seconds at the top
- 10–20 repetitions
- 2 sets

How to Do It:

- Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat
- Place a resistance band around your thighs
- Squeeze your glutes and lift your hips toward the ceiling, pushing knees outward
- Hold briefly, then lower slowly

Optional Pain Relief (After Exercises) – Ice and TENS

- Use for 10–15 minutes after exercises
 - Keep a barrier between ice and skin
 - TENS should feel like a comfortable tingling, not pain
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