



Lower Limb Exercises

Improve Your Strength and Function

At Ochsner Therapy & Wellness, our goal is to help you achieve the highest level of function possible. Whether you have an injury, are recovering from illness, or have a long-term disability, we are here to help.

For patients with longer-term disabilities, our goal is to educate and train both you and your family members. We do this by showing you how to compensate for limits to the way your body functions. We're happy to discuss your progress or concerns with you and your family.

The exercises in this booklet are designed to improve the strength and function of your lower body.



If a specific exercise causes pain or makes pain worse, stop that exercise. Talk to your physical therapist to determine if there is something different you can try to help strengthen that area.

Exercises Lying Down



1. Ankle pumps

Point your foot up then down.
Repeat ____ times.

2. Glute sets

Squeeze buttocks together. Tighten buttocks and hold for 3-5 seconds.
Repeat ____ times.



3. Short arc quads

Roll a towel up or fold a pillow in half and place it under the knee. Raise your foot until your knee is straight. Be sure the back of your knee stays in contact with the towel/pillow. Repeat ____ times.



4. Hip Abduction/Adduction

Keep your toes pointed up and your knee straight. Slide your whole leg out to the side as far as possible, then back to starting position. Repeat ____ times.



5. Straight leg raise

Keep your toes pointed up and your knee straight. (You may wish to bend the other knee and keep that foot flat on the floor.) Raise the straight leg up about 6 to 12 inches and hold for 3-5 seconds, then slowly lower to starting position. Repeat ____ times.



6. Quad sets

Pull toes toward you and tighten the muscles on top of your thigh by pushing the back of your knee down. Hold for 3-5 seconds. Place a small towel or face cloth under knee if needed. Repeat ____ times.



7. Heel slides

Slide foot back towards buttocks by bending your knee and hip, then slide leg back to starting position. Repeat ____ times.



8. Bridge lifts

Bend your hips and knees so your feet are flat. Lift buttocks off surface as high as you can, slowly lower to starting position. Repeat ____ times.



Exercises Sitting Down



Unless directed otherwise, sit straight up on a sturdy chair with your feet flat on the floor.

9. Seated hip adduction

Sit on the floor or a firm flat surface with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Place a pillow or exercise ball in between legs above the knee. Squeeze legs together and hold 3-5 seconds. Repeat ____ times.



10. Seated ankle pumps

Start with your feet flat on floor. Point toes up, then raise heels up. Repeat ____ times.



11. Seated hip flexion

Lift knee towards chest and slowly lower to starting position. Repeat ____ times.



12. Seated long arc quads

Raise foot until leg is straight. Hold 3-5 seconds, then slowly lower to starting position. Repeat ____ times.





1-866-OCHSNER | ochsner.org