

**Is one off management versus a course of treatment more effective in terms of reducing pain and function for patients over 50 years old with osteoarthritis of the knee joint.**

### **Clinical bottom line**

There is evidence to suggest that there is short term benefit (up to 24 weeks) in advising patients with OA knee to undertake active exercise. The benefits include reduced pain and improved function in relation to walking, sitting to standing, bending and reclining. (van bar et al, 2001)

### **Criteria for Critically appraised Topic**

<b>One off session</b>	may include assessment, exercise, advice and or leaflet, face to face contact. Includes any practitioner.
<b>Course of treatment</b>	Pragmatic, any treatment may be included. Any practitioner can deliver. In primary or secondary care setting
<b>Outcome</b>	Pain, function, return to work. Quality of life, medical consultations
<b>Population</b>	OA knee, male and female, 50 years or over. Includes tibio femoral and patello femoral joint. Primary or secondary care population

### **Search Terms used**

The following databases were searched:

Cochrane, Pedro, NHS Library for Health, Medline, Cinahl, Embase, Psycinfo, Clinical Evidence, Bandolier, NELH, Professional websites, guidelines, NICE. HTA

The following types of study were used

Systematic reviews, RCTS. (to exclude cross over studies unless they are the best available evidence).

## Key words searched

Systematic review, randomised controlled trial, knee, knee pain, osteoarthritis, joint pain, tibio femoral and patello femoral joint, Pain, function, return to work. Quality of life,, medical consultations, adult, advice, one off sessions, exercise, information leaflet, multidisciplinary, education, physiotherapy, physical therapy.

Search for the past 10 years i.e. 1995 – 2005

## Available Evidence

Database	Number of relevant abstracts
Clinical evidence	0
PsychInfo	29 unique
AMED/ CINAHL/ Embase	418 unique
PEDRO	0 unique
Medline	257
Cochrane	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>705</b>

Four clinicians reviewed the content of the 705 abstracts and assessed their relevance to the clinical question

705 abstracts were narrowed down to 22 articles that would be assessed for quality and relevance to practice by the group.

The articles were appraised using:

- Critical appraisal skills programme (CASP) checklist for systematic reviews and RCTs.
- Group discussion and consensus agreement

One randomised controlled trial was relevant to the specific clinical question.

Van Bar ME, Dekker J Oostendorp RAB, Bijl D, Voorn Th B and Bijlsma JWW 2001 Effectiveness of exercises in patients with osteoarthritis of hip or knee: nine months' follow up *Annals of Rheumatic disease* 60;12 p 1123.

Evaluated effectiveness of exercise in patients with OA hip or Knee at 9 month follow up. Good methodological quality. Good long term follow up. Included both hip and knee OA, with approximately two thirds of the patients having knee OA. Undertaken in the Netherlands. Included 40 year old and over so includes a younger population. Lengthy treatment session, i.e. average of 16 sessions. The main outcome measure was pain and observed disability which was classified as walking, sitting to standing, bending and reclining.

The study showed a significant short term benefit in pain at 12 and 24 weeks but not at 36 weeks. Also shows short term benefit in observed disability at 12 weeks. There was no sub group analysis of patients with OA knee. Due to long treatment intervention (16 sessions), doesn't reflect current clinical practice in UK. This doesn't answer the question of one off physiotherapy group physiotherapy treatment. The one off session in this trial was delivered by a GP.

### **Implications for practice**

- Clinicians should ensure that patients with diagnosed OA of the knee, over the age of 40 should be given active exercises.
- Patients should be advised of the length of time that they are likely to receive benefit for.
- Clinicians should be aware that the evidence was based on 16 sessions which does not reflect current local practice.

### **Reference**

Van Bar ME, Dekker J Oostendorp RAB, Bijl D, Voorn Th B and Bijlsma JWW 2001 Effectiveness of exercises in patients with osteoarthritis of hip or knee: nine months' follow up *Annals of Rheumatic disease* 60;12 p 1123.