

## ***Do you think you need physiotherapy?***

(How to refer yourself for out-patient physiotherapy)

### ***What is self-referral to physiotherapy?***

This means you can now see a physiotherapist without having to see your GP first.

### ***Is physiotherapy right for me?***

Physiotherapy can be helpful if you have problems with any of the following:

- Back pain
- Neck pain
- Strains or sprains
- Joint or muscle problems
- Continence problems

If your problem is:

- Not improving
- Causing you to have difficulties with work or with carrying out your normal activities
- Causing your sleep to be disturbed

then physiotherapy may be able to help.

### ***How do I contact the physiotherapist?***

You will need to complete a referral form which will give the physiotherapist some information about the problems you are having.

You can get a referral form from your GP practice or from your local physiotherapy department.

### ***Can everyone use this service?***

This service is not available if you are under 16 years of age.

### ***What happens next?***

Once we receive your referral form a physiotherapist will look at it. We will then contact you either to discuss your problem or to arrange an appointment with the physiotherapist, based on the information in your form.

Depending on the nature of your problem you may be placed on a waiting list for physiotherapy.

At your first appointment you will be assessed. We will advise you of the options available to help with your problem and help you to decide what the best plan is for you.

***Will my GP know if I have referred myself for physiotherapy?***

Yes. Once you have completed your physiotherapy we will write a letter to your GP advising that you have attended the service and what we have done. We may also need to liaise with your GP either when we receive your form or during the course of any treatment if we need any further information.

***What can I do to help myself in the meantime?***

Research has shown that resting for more than a day or so does not help and may actually prolong pain and disability. You may need to modify your activities at first, but the sooner you get back to normal activity, the sooner you will feel better.

Getting stiff joints and muscles working again can be a bit sore at first. However, this is quite normal and is often a good sign that you are making progress.

Changing your position or activity frequently throughout the day will also help to prevent or reduce stiffness. Try to build up your activity gradually.

***What else might help?***

If you have an old injury then you may find that holding a hot water bottle wrapped in a towel on the affected area for 10 minutes reduces the pain.

If you have a new injury then you can use a pack of frozen peas or something similar wrapped in a damp towel for 10 minutes

**Be aware that hot and cold can burn. Check your skin every 5 minutes. If your skin becomes very red or blotchy, stop using heat/cold right away.**

***What about painkillers?***

Over the counter painkillers can be helpful. A pharmacist can advise you on the appropriate tablets.

***Useful contact details***

If your problem gets worse or if you are worried about your problem, you can contact:

**NHS 24**  
 **08454 24 24 24** 

**or speak to your pharmacist or GP.**