



Improving Your Health with the Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy Outpatient Team

This leaflet has been given to you to tell you more about physiotherapy and the lifestyle factors that are important for the health of your muscles, joints and bones.

About Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy helps with **sudden injury** like a broken bone or sprain and with managing **long-term medical conditions**, for example arthritis.

It is important that you are **involved in your own care**. Your physiotherapist will help you to understand your condition and develop a treatment plan.

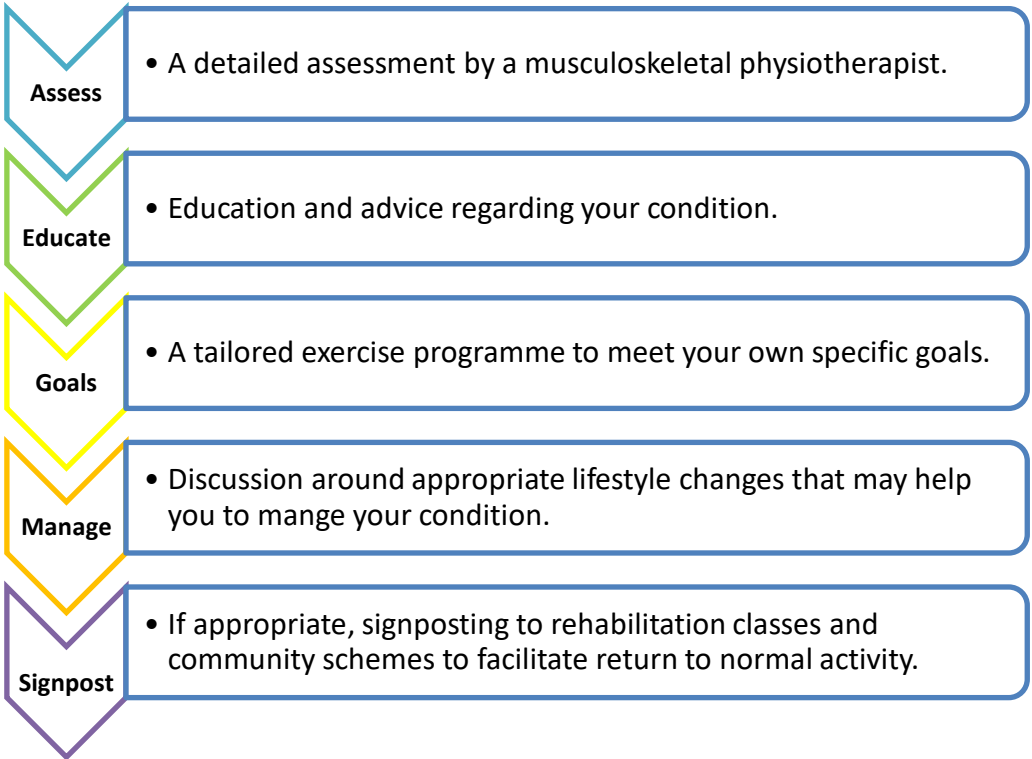
Physiotherapy aims to give you the **confidence** to manage your musculoskeletal condition at any time in your life.

Physiotherapy takes a '**whole person**' approach to health and wellbeing, which includes advising you on your **general lifestyle**.

Take control of your body



What will happen at my physiotherapy appointments?



How does my lifestyle affect my condition?

There is a strong link between **lifestyle** and the **health of your muscles, joints and bones**. Healthy lifestyle choices help with your **recovery**, **reduce** the effect long term conditions have on your life and help **prevent** further musculoskeletal conditions.

What can I do to help my condition?

Exercise

Sleep

Diet & Smoking

Mental Wellbeing

Exercise—every move counts!

How will exercise help my muscles, joints and bones?

- Builds **stronger** and **healthier** bones, muscles and discs, making moving around easier and lessening the risk of injuries and falls.
- Helps keep weight healthy which reduces the risk of and symptoms of some conditions like osteoarthritis.
- Faster and better **recovery** from injury.
- Can help to reduce pain.

When? It's never too late - becoming active at any age will benefit your health.

Who will benefit? Everyone! With the right advice people of any age, pregnant women and people living with disabilities and long term conditions will benefit.

Not sure how to get started? Your physiotherapist can help you find and start an exercise you will enjoy and direct you to groups and facilities in your local area to help you keep going.

How much? Any is better than none!

The World Health Organisation recommends -

How much activity do I need?

Moderate-intensity aerobic activity

Anything that gets your heart beating faster counts.

at least
150
minutes
a week

AND

Muscle-strengthening activity

Do activities that make your muscles work harder than usual.

at least
2
days
a week



Tight on time this week? **Start with just 5 minutes.** It all adds up!

Mental health and wellbeing—how can this affect my injury or condition?

- Feeling low in mood or experiencing stress, anxiety or depression can make it more difficult to cope with pain.
- Looking after your mental health and wellbeing can help reduce pain, improve energy levels and improve sleep which can make it easier to manage your injury or condition.

How can I help look after my mental health and wellbeing?



Diet

How will a healthier diet help my muscles, joints and bones?

- Helps control your weight which reduces the risks of many common health conditions.
- Helps with **recovery** — the right amount of nutrients helps your body repair itself.
- Build **strong muscles and bones** reducing your risk of falls and broken bones.

Tips for a Healthier Diet

Eat 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day

Eat higher fibre or whole grain foods

Eat more fish

Cut down on saturated fat and sugar

Eat less salt

Overweight? Any weight loss at any stage of life
reduces the risk of and improves the symptoms of osteoarthritis such as pain

Smoking

Did you know that smoking reduces the amount of oxygen in your body, therefore reducing its ability to heal and repair?

How will quitting help my muscles, joints and bones?

- Helps to speed up your body's healing processes.
- Reduces pain levels.
- Improves oxygen to your muscles, joints and bones making exercise easier.
- Lowers your risk of osteoporosis and joint damage.
- Less likely to have low back pain.

Find more information at
www.stopsmokingni.info

Further information on all aspects of this leaflet can be found on www.nhs.uk

Sleep

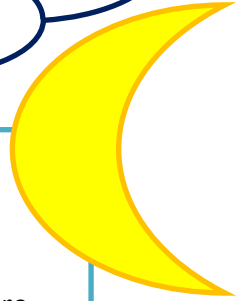
Pain can cause poor sleep. However, poor sleep can cause more pain. Trying to break the cycle can have a positive effect on your body.

Good quality sleep can-

- Help your pain levels.
- Improve energy level allowing you to become more active.
- Allow your body to repair damaged tissue.
- Help your mental well being.
- Help you stay at a healthy weight.

Tips for good quality sleep

- Aim to get around 8 hours every night.
- Keep a regular routine, sleep time and waking time.
- Avoid stimulation close to bed time e.g. electronic devices, caffeine, alcohol, exercise, food.
- Take regular exercise.
- Avoid naps.
- Create a restful environment free from noise, lights and distractions.
- Keep a note pad to write down your worries.





The Physiotherapy Team will work with you to achieve your goals. This will allow you to get back to what matters most.

Goal Setting

Your condition or injury may make some daily activities more difficult to do. Identifying this and focusing on what is important to you will help to motivate you.

Think?

What would you love to be able to do?

'I want to return to playing football in 3 months in time for training season'

'I want to be able to look after my grandchildren after school in September'

'I want to be able to go to the supermarket and manage a full shop next month'

Goals should be **specific** and **meaningful** to you. They should be **realistic** and you should have a **time frame** in mind. Make the goal challenging but not unachievable.

What smaller steps can you think of to reach these larger goals?

'Go to gym for 1 hour 3 days out of 7'

'Plan to walk for 15 mins everyday after breakfast'

'Wash 1 window every day'

'Practice 20 mins relaxation every day at 11.30 when everyone is out of house'

Remember – Goals are individual to you and will vary between people.

How? Make a plan—your physiotherapist will be keen to help you.