

Physiotherapy treatment and your rights

You may be wondering what to expect from your physiotherapy appointment(s). This leaflet hopes to make you feel more informed about the process for attending our physiotherapy department and your rights in terms of treatment.

What is physiotherapy?

Your GP or consultant may have referred you to physiotherapy for help improving your symptoms. Physiotherapy can treat most of the areas in your body and can be particularly beneficial if you have musculoskeletal pain or nerve problems. It can also help address sports injuries, back pain and many other issues besides. Physiotherapy can help stiff areas feel looser; weak areas get stronger and also help control and reduce pain.

What will the assessment entail?

Your initial consultation is likely to take 45 minutes. Your physiotherapist will ask you some questions about your symptoms and then will ask to assess the problem area. To assess you properly during your appointment the treating physiotherapist will need to observe the affected area(s) and this will normally require you to remove an appropriate level of clothing (but not your underwear). For example, for neck, upper back or shoulder problems, be prepared to remove upper garments and for lower limb problems, to remove lower garments. You are welcome to bring a pair of shorts to the assessment with you if you prefer. For people with lower back pain, it is important that your physiotherapist can see the whole of your spine and lower limb or problems contributing to your symptoms may not be picked up.

If you feel unhappy exposing any area of your body, please let your physiotherapist know at any time during your consultation. You can stop the assessment at any time and ask questions at any time too. The assessment can be modified according to your wishes.

After your assessment, your physiotherapist will tell you what problems they feel are contributing to your symptoms and propose a treatment plan. It may be that specific exercises are suggested or 'hands-on' treatment. Either way, your physiotherapist will explain their reasoning for the proposed treatment plan, giving you options about where to go from here.

Although many of the treatment techniques that physiotherapy use and suggest are unlikely to significantly flare up or worsen your symptoms, some procedures such as acupuncture and manipulative therapy can carry some risks. For any treatment suggested, your physiotherapy should offer potential benefits, risks and alternatives. Your decision whether to agree to treatment (or not) will not infringe upon your care in any way.

Once you have given your consent further appointments will then be arranged, wherever possible, at a time convenient to you to allow you to continue with your treatment.

What am I consenting to?

Physiotherapists will not begin any form of objective assessment or indeed treatment unless you have given your consent. This may be given verbally or for some interventions, written consent may be needed.

It is essential that before saying 'yes' to any part of your assessment and/or treatment, that you feel fully informed about what you are agreeing to. It is your physiotherapist's responsibility to make sure you understand all your treatment options but it is also your responsibility to let your physiotherapist know if you have any reservations or unanswered questions about the proposed treatment.

What will treatment involve?

Your physiotherapist is likely to give you some exercises and advice to do at home to assist your recovery. In addition to this, you may be offered other treatment suggestions including acupuncture, manual therapy, ultrasound and soft tissue work.

How many sessions will I need to attend?

Your physiotherapist will give you some indication of expected recovery times after your initial assessment and arrange appointments accordingly. Generally speaking, if you do not feel an improvement after 5 sessions, your physiotherapist may discuss with you about a referral for further investigation. However, it is important to note that some conditions take longer than others to resolve - especially if you have had your symptoms for a long time or if you have had surgery. If your physiotherapist doesn't think they can help you with your symptoms, they will explain why and make an appropriate referral to another healthcare professional or back to your GP.

What happens at the end of my treatment?

Our physiotherapists make every effort to inform your referrer of your progress during treatment and may send update reports as requested. At the end of your treatment a final report will be sent to your referrer indicating what treatment you have undergone and the effects of these treatments.

Can I bring someone with me to my physiotherapy appointment?

Yes, you can, and they are welcome to stay with you while you have your assessment and treatment. This could be an interpreter if you think that would be helpful.

What happens if I have to cancel or change my appointment?

Most appointments carry a charge if they are amended or cancelled within 24 hours of the scheduled appointment start time, or if you fail to attend for your appointment. These charges can vary and are up to the full cost of the appointment. Please contact the dedicated booking line on 08450 454845 if you would like to confirm the applicable cancellation, amendment or non-attendance charge for your specific booking.

Am I entitled to see my physiotherapy records?

Yes you can request your records at any time by writing to the manager of the physiotherapy clinic. Your physiotherapist will be able to explain the procedure for doing this to you.

Should I wish to make a complaint, how do I do this?

If you have any concerns regarding your physiotherapist or treatment then please speak directly with the centre manager who will work to resolve matters

If your complaint is not resolved please do write to us and we will respond to you directly:

Group Customer Services Manager

Nuffield Health

Epsom Gateway, Ashley Avenue

Epsom

Surrey

KT18 5AL

We look forward to seeing you on your visit to our physiotherapy clinic. Thank you.