

Musculoskeletal advice

Introduction

This leaflet is designed to provide general advice, exercises and guidance to managing your pain while you wait for your appointment with the service.

What can I do whilst I am waiting for my appointment?

- **Exercise** – Particularly for conditions which have been persisting for several months, starting some form of general exercise such as swimming, cycling or other low impact exercise can be a great help.
- **Medication** – Ensure the medication you are taking helps. If not, speak with your GP for an alternative as some people do not respond to certain medications, and some need medication targeting specific tissue i.e. nerve related pain.
- **Rest** – An acute injury needs a period of rest to allow the injured/irritated tissues to settle. This may mean stopping a painful activity for a period of time e.g. typing / lifting / walking.
- **Time** – Time is a healer. Most conditions heal within a matter of weeks / months. For example 90% of back pain settles within six weeks.
- **Don't worry.** The overwhelming majority of conditions have no serious cause even if they are very painful.

What exercises would help me?

Stay active as most musculoskeletal problems are managed by exercise to restore function as the inflammation and pain settles. Here are some helpful exercises to try whilst you wait for your appointment.

These exercises are not suited to everyone. If they aggravate your symptoms then stop and wait for your assessment or see your GP. For further information please see www.nhs.uk / www.arthritisresearchuk.org

- **Back pain** (spend up to two minutes on each exercise) – see diagram overleaf
 1. Hug your knees to your chest and hold 5 - 30 seconds
 2. Arch your back up to the ceiling and then hang down to the floor – repeat up to 15-20 times
 3. Repeatedly drop your knees side to side rhythmically and slowly with feet on the floor

1.



2.



3.



- **Leg pain**

1. Keep knee straight, lift leg and hold 5 - 20 seconds
2. Sitting – lift foot and straighten knee – Hold 5 - 20 seconds
3. Lying – slide foot back and forth for two minutes

1.



2.



3.



- **Arm pain (spend up to two minutes on each exercise)**

1. Let the arm hang and then swing the arm back and forth
2. Repeatedly slide your hand up and down a wall
3. Place your hand on a table and slide it back and forth

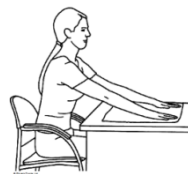
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General Trust information

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS is a confidential service for people who would like information, help or advice about the services provided by any of our hospitals. Please call 0800 783 4372 between 9.30am and 4.30pm or e-mail lnwh-tr.PALS@nhs.net. Please note that this service does not provide clinical advice so please contact the relevant department directly to discuss any concerns or queries about your upcoming test, examination or operation.

For a translation of this leaflet or for an English version in large print, audio or Braille please ask a member of staff or call 0800 783 4372.