

Self-referral  
service -  
without visiting  
your GP

# Do you need physiotherapy?

You can now refer  
yourself to the local  
NHS physiotherapy  
service directly – if you  
are over 16 years old.



Richmond Community  
Healthcare in Partnership  
Working together for better care



# Physio self-referral

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## What is physiotherapy self-referral:

If you have a Richmond GP, you can now access the local NHS physiotherapy service directly, without seeing your GP first. Any person above 16 years of age can refer themselves directly to a physiotherapist without seeing a GP. We provide specialist assessment, early advice and treatment for people with back, neck or joint complaints; problems following injuries; muscle or tendon problems or any recent changes in a long-standing condition.

If imaging (X-Ray, MRI, or ultrasound) or a consultant opinion is required, this will all be arranged.

Once we receive your referral we will either: send you advice and appropriate guidance, exercises in the post or by email, or, arrange a face-to-face assessment.

All patients are prioritised as either urgent or routine according to their clinical need.

## How do I contact the service?

**Via the internet:** You can access our self-referral form by either visiting your GP's website and following the link, or visiting **[selfrefer.richmondgpalliance.co.uk](http://selfrefer.richmondgpalliance.co.uk)**

Once submitted, your requirements will be assessed by a senior physiotherapist. We will aim to contact you within four working days, and you can expect a routine physiotherapy appointment within 4-6 weeks or, an urgent appointment within 1 week.

If you are unable to use a computer or do not have someone to help you, you can call the team on: **020 8714 4019** between 10:00am and 12:30am. The team will go through the form with you and fill it in on your behalf.

## Contact details

- 020 8714 4019
- [HRCH.MSK-Richmond@nhs.net](mailto:HRCH.MSK-Richmond@nhs.net) (enquires only)
- [selfrefer.richmondgpalliance.co.uk](http://selfrefer.richmondgpalliance.co.uk)

## What you need to know

What can I do to help myself in the meantime?

### Keep active



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 initially, but the sooner you get back to normal exercise the sooner you will feel better.

Getting stiff joints and muscles working again can be painful, but this is a normal response and not a sign of damage. Feeling a bit sore initially is alright and often a good sign that you are making good progress.

Changing your position throughout the day will help to prevent and reduce stiffness. Try to keep yourself active and build up your general activity gradually.

Visit: [www.hrch.nhs.uk/physio-richmond](http://www.hrch.nhs.uk/physio-richmond) for advice leaflets for common problems.

### Painkillers

If you have been prescribed painkillers these may help you to return to normal activities. Non prescribed painkillers can also be helpful. Your community Pharmacy will be able to advise you on the appropriate medication.

### Hot or cold

Some people find that a hot water bottle wrapped in a towel on the affected area for 20 minutes can reduce pain, whilst others prefer using a pack of frozen peas wrapped in a thin damp cloth for 10 to 15 minutes. Cold is preferable if a joint feels hot and/or swollen.

**Please note:** Be aware that hot and cold can burn and that you need to check regularly (every 5-10 minutes) that your skin does not become very red or blotchy. If this happens, stop use.

## What if the exercises/ advice do not help?

If you are not improving or if you are getting worse having been given advice and exercises, or if you have any concerns, please contact the HRCH physiotherapy service by phone to arrange either a telephone review or appointment so that further treatment options can be discussed.

**Please note:** the physiotherapy service does not provide emergency care. If you suspect you have sustained a serious injury or broken a bone you should visit your nearest A&E department or telephone your surgery for further advice.

**If you have any of the following please see your GP before referring yourself to physiotherapy:**

- Changes in your bladder and bowel habits

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- A hot swollen joint

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- Constant severe pain and you are unable to find relief

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- Weakness, pins and needles, loss of feeling

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- Unexpected weight loss

## Language support

This document can be provided in different languages and formats.

For more information please contact our

**Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):**

Email: [pals.hrch@nhs.net](mailto:pals.hrch@nhs.net) Freephone: **0800 953 0363**