GIG Cymru. NHS Wales

**Physio Direct**

A Physiotherapy advice telephone service for patients with a GP in Flintshire

Available at various times Monday – Friday

**03000 859048**

What is it?

A telephone service that has been set up to provide early advice and management for people with a muscle or joint problem, or following injury.

Who is it for?

Anyone over the age of 18 who is registered with a Flintshire GP.

**Please do not contact Physio direct if:**

* you are under 18
* you have a neurological condition, such as a stroke or motor neurone disease
* you need a mobility assessment
* you have a hearing impairment
* you have a language difficulty / need an interpreter
* your problem relates to a womens health issue
* you have a history of mental health issues

Instead you should contact your GP and request a referral to a Physiotherapy department, or self refer by filling in a self referral form.

Who will I speak to?

Initially, a member of our Admin team

will take your details and a brief description of the problem. They will then book an appointment time with a member of the Physiotherapy team. We aim to make this telephone call

How long will the phone call take?

The length of the telephone calls varies, but may take up to 10-15 minutes.

How and when do I contact the service?

Booking lines are covered Monday to Friday, normally 9-4 pm. However this line is often busy so we recommend you leave a short message for us to call you back. Telephone assessment times vary from day to day, and we offer a mix of early / late appointments.

What will happen when I phone?

You will be asked a number of questions by the Physiotherapist in order to fully assess the problem.

You will be asked questions about:

* Your problem and how it is affecting your daily life
* Your current medication
* Any other medical problems

It would be helpful to have this information ready for the assessment.

The Physiotherapist will then discuss with you the most best way of managing the problem. This may include one of the following:

* Advice
* Advice and appropriate exercises.

Within the information sent out to you following the telephone call, you will be given the contact details for the Physiohterapist you spoke to. If you are not getting any better with the advice given or if you have any concerns; please do not hesitate to contact Physiodirect for further advice.

What can I do to help myself in the meantime?

**Keeping 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 doing them again, the sooner you will feel better.

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

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

**Painkillers**

If you have been prescribed painkillers these may help you to return to normal activities. ‘Over the counter’ painkillers can also be helpful; a Pharmacist will be able to advise you on the best tablets to take.

**Hot or Cold**

Some people find that heat (e.g. a wheat bag) on the affected area for 20 minutes can reduce pain, whilst others prefer using a pack of frozen peas wrapped in a **damp** towel for 10-20 mins.

**N.B.** Be aware that hot and cold can burn and that you need to check (every 5-10 minutes) that your skin does not become very red or blotchy; if this happens, stop use.

Aims and benefits

* Prompt advice and exercises to help you with early recovery
* Help you manage your condition without needing a Physiotherapy appointment
* Appointment within one week.

***Bilingual copy available on request****.*