Therapy and Rehab
Physiotherapy

PATIENT INFORMATION

Physiotherapy after surgery

Postoperative rehabilitation

Helping you recover safely, regain function and get back to what matters to you.



WHO MAY BENEFIT?

People who have had an operation and would like professional rehabilitation to help them:

- Recover safely and build confidence
- Restore movement, strength and function
- Address pain and stiffness appropriately
- Return to everyday activities and valued routines

A planned approach to your recovery

Surgery is only one part of the recovery process. The right rehabilitation can help you work towards restoring movement, strength and independence. Your physiotherapist will consider the type of operation, your overall health, your current abilities and the advice provided by your surgical team.

Your recovery plan should be individual

We work with you to understand your goals and agree a programme that respects your operation-specific precautions and current stage of recovery.

EARLY RECOVERY

Safe, guided rehabilitation to support healing and reduce avoidable complications.

REGAIN FUNCTION

Progressive exercises to restore movement, strength and independence.

BUILD CONFIDENCE

Practical support to help you return to daily activities and your normal routine.

ONGOING SUPPORT

Advice and exercise to maintain progress and manage setbacks.

What does postoperative physiotherapy involve?

Your programme depends on the procedure you have had, your recovery, your medical history and the instructions from your surgeon or hospital team. Following an assessment, physiotherapy may include:

1. **Early movement and safe mobility**
   Support with getting in and out of bed, standing, transfers and walking where these activities are appropriate. We can help you practise movement safely within the guidance you have been given.

2. **Movement and flexibility**
   Exercises to work on joint or body movement where permitted by your postoperative precautions. The aim is to address stiffness and help you move more comfortably and effectively.

3. **Strength and muscle activation**
   A graded exercise programme to address weakness and help rebuild the strength needed for daily activities. Exercises are selected and progressed according to your operation and recovery.

4. **Walking, balance and confidence**
   Where relevant, rehabilitation may include walking practice, balance activities, confidence with mobility and advice about walking aids or equipment.

5. **Functional rehabilitation**
   Practising tasks that matter in daily life, such as rising from a chair, managing steps, getting dressed, preparing meals or returning to work and hobbies.

6. **Advice and self-management**
   Guidance on pacing, exercise, positioning and managing activity between appointments, while following your surgical team's instructions.

Operations and procedures we may support

We provide physiotherapy and rehabilitation for patients following musculoskeletal and orthopaedic surgery. This may include rehabilitation following joint replacement, fracture or trauma-related procedures, and other operations affecting movement and physical function.

Please contact us to discuss your particular procedure and whether our service is appropriate.

The exact rehabilitation approach is always guided by your operation, your surgeon's instructions and your individual assessment.

Working alongside your surgical team

Physiotherapy does not replace postoperative review or advice from your surgeon, hospital or other healthcare professionals. Please continue to attend your planned follow-up appointments and follow the instructions you have been given.

If your symptoms or recovery raise concerns, your physiotherapist may recommend that you contact your surgical team or seek further medical assessment.

Your first assessment

Your physiotherapist will discuss your operation and recovery so far, listen to your concerns and assess what is appropriate at your current stage. Depending on your condition and the instructions you have received, this may include:

- The type and date of your operation and any relevant hospital or discharge information.
- Your current symptoms, including pain, swelling, stiffness, fatigue or changes in sensation, where relevant.
- Any precautions, movement restrictions, weight-bearing instructions or wound-care guidance provided by your surgical team.
- Your mobility, transfers, walking, movement, strength and ability to manage daily activities, as appropriate.
- Your home circumstances, support needs, equipment and personal recovery goals.

How your rehabilitation progresses

1. **Understand your starting point**
   We establish what you can currently do, what is difficult and what matters most to you.
2. **Agree realistic goals**
   Together, we identify practical goals that reflect your operation, health, daily routine and priorities.
3. **Build a suitable programme**
   Your physiotherapist selects exercises and functional activities that are appropriate for your stage of recovery and any restrictions.
4. **Review and adapt**
   Your progress and response are reviewed. The programme can be adjusted as your movement, strength, confidence and tolerance for activity change.

Where can you receive physiotherapy?

Therapy and Rehab offers clinic appointments and, where available and appropriate, home and community visits. The most suitable setting will depend on your mobility, clinical needs, location and the type of rehabilitation required.

Clinic appointments	Appointments are available in Leeds, Wakefield and Batley.
Home and community visits	May be considered if travelling to a clinic is difficult or if practising daily activities in your own environment would be helpful.
Before your appointment	Please have your discharge information, operation details and any exercise or precaution guidance available, if possible. Tell us about any changes in your symptoms or mobility.

Frequently asked questions

When should I start physiotherapy after surgery?

This depends on the operation, your medical condition and the instructions from your surgeon or hospital team. Follow the rehabilitation advice you were given at discharge. If you are unsure when it is appropriate to begin or progress exercises, check with your surgical team.

Will the exercises be painful?

Some movement or exercise may feel uncomfortable during recovery, but your programme should be appropriate to your condition and stage of healing. Tell your physiotherapist about pain, swelling or any unexpected response so the programme can be reviewed.

How many sessions will I need?

This varies according to the procedure, your health, starting abilities, goals and progress. Your physiotherapist will discuss your needs and review the plan with you.

Can I have physiotherapy at home?

Home and community visits may be available depending on your location, needs and appointment availability. Please contact us to discuss this.

Can you help if I have had a joint replacement?

We provide rehabilitation for patients following joint replacement and other orthopaedic procedures. Your programme will take account of the specific guidance and precautions provided by your surgical team.

WHEN TO SEEK URGENT MEDICAL HELP

Call **999** for chest pain, severe breathlessness, signs of stroke or sudden weakness. Contact your surgical team or **NHS 111** urgently if you notice signs of infection at the wound, such as increasing redness, heat, discharge or fever, or new calf pain or swelling. Do not start, stop or change exercises or weight-bearing activity contrary to the advice of your surgical team.

Let’s discuss your recovery

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SCAN TO BOOK

Important information: This leaflet provides general information and does not replace individual medical advice, your discharge instructions or postoperative precautions. If you experience a sudden or severe deterioration, seek urgent medical advice.