



University Hospitals Bristol
NHS Foundation Trust

Patient information service
St Michael's Hospital
Weston General Hospital

Problems with your bladder or pelvic floor muscles

Self-referral form for physiotherapy



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Is physiotherapy right for me?

Physiotherapy can be particularly helpful if you suffer from leakage of urine during exercise or when you cough or sneeze.

It can also help if you suddenly need to go to the toilet but can't get there in time.

These are common problems that affect one in three women at some time during their life. Physiotherapy can also help you if your pelvic floor muscles are weak.

What is self-referral and what do I need to do?

Self-referral is just another way of getting to see a physiotherapist. It means that you don't have to see your GP and wait for them to contact the physiotherapist.

This service is available if you are female, over the age of 16 and have a bladder or pelvic floor problem. All you need to do is complete the form inside this leaflet.

What will happen next?

A specialist physiotherapist will look at the information you have written on the form. We will then write to you when you reach the top of the waiting list for you to phone in to book an appointment. The physiotherapy treatment you receive will be the same as if your GP had referred you.

Continued on page 7

Referring yourself to pelvic floor physiotherapy

Please complete this form and return it to the address on page 6.

Name: Date:

Address:

.....

.....

.....

Date of birth: Email:

Contact details

Can we leave a message at these numbers?

Phone no. (home): Yes No

Phone no. (work): Yes No

Phone no. (mobile): Yes No

You GP's name and surgery

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Do you require an interpreter? Yes No

If yes, which language?

Please give a brief description of why you would like a physiotherapy assessment.

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Who suggested physiotherapy?

GP Friend Healthcare professional

Or was it your own idea? Yes No

How long have you had this complaint?

Days Weeks Months Years

Is the problem new to you or the return of an old problem?

New problem Return of an old problem

Are your symptoms worsening? Yes No

Do you feel a stinging or burning sensation when you pass urine, or have you noticed any blood in your urine?

Yes No

If yes, please give details:

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.....

Have you ever had an abnormal cervical smear test?

Yes

No

If yes, please give details:

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.....

Have you had any unusual or unexpected bleeding or staining from the vagina?

Yes

No

If yes, please give details:

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.....

Do you have persistent abdominal pain?

Yes

No

Do you have persistent bloating that doesn't come and go?

Yes

No

Do you have difficulty eating or tend to eat less but feel fuller?

Yes

No

If yes, please give details:

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Have you suddenly lost weight without trying?

Yes

No

If yes, please give details:

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Do you have numbness, tingling or muscle weakness?

Yes

No

If yes, please give details:

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.....

.....

Please fill in pages 3, 4, 5 and 6, then pull out and return this form (in a stamped envelope) to on of the following addresses:

Weston General Hospital

Women's Health Physiotherapist
Physiotherapy department
Weston General Hospital
Grange Road, Uphill
Weston-Super-Mare
BS23 4TQ

St Michaels Hospital

Women's Health Physiotherapist
Physiotherapy department
St Michael's Hospital
Southwell Street
Bristol
BS2 8EG

How do I know whether I should see my GP?

If you have any concerns, you can always make an appointment to see your GP in the usual way and ask about a physiotherapy referral. You should always see your GP if:

- you think that you have a urine infection – that is, if you have a burning or stinging sensation when you pass urine or need to go to the toilet more often and more urgently than usual
- you notice any blood in your urine
- you have unexpected vaginal bleeding.

What can I do to help myself in the meantime?

You could try to exercise your pelvic floor muscles, but you need to make sure that you're doing this in the right way. Imagine that you're trying to stop yourself passing wind and at the same time trying to stop yourself from passing urine. It should feel like a 'squeeze and lift' inside. It's good to do a mixture of strong, long holds and short squeezes. Some women find this really difficult, so if you're not sure wait until you see the physiotherapist.

If you leak with exercise or when you cough or sneeze, you can try and do a strong 'squeeze and lift' just before the activity that causes the problem – for example just before lifting a heavy object or coughing or sneezing. If possible, you need to hold the 'squeeze and lift' until the activity is finished.

Try to drink about one and a half litres (three pints) of fluid each day. If you need to rush to get to the toilet in time, it may help to gradually reduce the amount of caffeine you drink, as caffeine can irritate your bladder. This includes tea, coffee, cola and energy drinks; these could be replaced by other non-caffeinated drinks.

Please note that if for any reason you would value a second opinion concerning your diagnosis or treatment, you are entirely within your rights to request this.

The first step would usually be to discuss this with the doctor or other lead clinician who is responsible for your care.

Smoking is the primary cause of preventable illness and premature death. For support in stopping smoking contact **NHS Smokefree on 0300 123 1044**

As well as providing clinical care, our Trust has an important role in research. This allows us to discover new and improved ways of treating patients.

While under our care, you may be invited to take part in research. To find out more please visit:
www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/research-innovation

For access to other patient leaflets and information please go to the following address:

www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/information-for-patients/

Hospital switchboard: 0117 923 0000



Minicom: 0117 934 9869



www.uhbristol.nhs.uk



For an interpreter or signer please contact the telephone number on your appointment letter.



For this leaflet in large print or PDF format, please email patientleaflets@uhbristol.nhs.uk.

