Your journey through physiotherapy

This flyer describes what happens when you see a physiotherapist and what may happen afterwards. You may not have to complete all of the steps – depending on the severity of your condition and the decisions you make with your physiotherapist about what's best for you.

It is useful to write down, and bring with you, any questions you would like to discuss with your physiotherapist to help you make the right decision for you.

When you see a physiotherapist, they will complete an assessment with you. Your appointment will be longer than a standard GP appointment and may last between 30-60 minutes. The assessment helps the physiotherapist build up a detailed picture of you and gives you a chance to discuss what's important to you, the options available and any advantages and disadvantages. Your assessment will normally include:

- Physical examination and possibly hands-on treatment (but no x-rays or other types of scan). You may be asked to undress for the physical examination so please wear suitable clothing.
- Clinical advice on how you can best manage your symptoms, usually with some exercises.
- Offering you one-to-one or group sessions to help restore strength, ease pain and support you with rehabilitation.
- Pointing you in the right direction for further assessments or to other services that may help manage your condition, assist with any social care needs or prevent falls.

Your physiotherapist will discuss the possible next steps with you, which could be:

- You are given healthy lifestyle advice, such as weight management or smoking cessation advice.
- You are given advice and support from the physiotherapist to manage your condition independently.
- A small number of patients have a more complicated condition or symptoms that do not improve. The physiotherapist or GP may then decide you need to see a more senior specialist for a further assessment.

The specialist will examine you and will support you to make decisions about treatments that are right for you. They may arrange for any appropriate tests.

If surgery is not an option:

Your specialist will advise and support you on how best to self-manage your condition.

If surgery is an option:

Your specialist will pass your details to the local booking service who will contact you to arrange an outpatient appointment to discuss your treatment options with a consultant team.

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1. On average, one in 10 patients have a more complicated condition that needs further assessment.
2. This is usually a specialist physiotherapist or GP with Specialist Interest (GPSI).
3. The booking service is called the Devon Referral Support Services (DRSS).

For more information, please visit www.myhealth-devon.nhs.uk