

Q. Why am I being advised to look at information on a website or TV?

The information has been developed with the input of patients and clinical experts. It offers a range of advice on how to cope if you have muscle, back or joint problems, including exercise videos to help you to get moving again, advice on medication, work and sports. The address you will need for the website is www.nhsinform.co.uk/msk



Q. What if I don't have access to the internet from home?

- Could you access the website with the help of family or friends?
- You can access the information using digital TV via Freesat and SKY (community channel 539) and Virgin Media ('Home' button – 'Interactive')
- If you are still unable to access this information then let us know when you call
- Download our **'MSK Help' App**

Q. What's different about the new phone service?

It means you have speedy access to find out if you need to see a healthcare professional. It also means you have key information and



advice about how to help your problem when previously you would have had to wait until you saw a healthcare professional to access this.

Often people do not need to see a healthcare professional if they follow the best advice.

If you do need to be referred to a healthcare professional we will arrange this for you but please be advised waiting times vary from place to place.

You can view a short video about the service at www.nhsinform.co.uk/msk/contact

Q. What happened before this new phone line?

Your doctor would have referred you to your local service or in some areas people could refer themselves directly. Often there was a wait to see a healthcare professional, which meant you would have a delay in getting the right information that helps you to help yourself on the road to recovery.



Muscle, back or joint problems?

Why call 0845 604 0001?

Frequently asked questions



Q. Why phone 0845 604 0001?

This is a new pilot service, currently operating in some Health Board areas that aims to point you in the right direction if you have a problem with your joints, muscles or back.

The lines are open **9am - 6pm Monday to Friday** (but not Public Holidays).

Q. Why has my doctor suggested I call this number?

Your doctor thinks you may benefit from some key information and advice to help with your problem or by possibly a referral to a healthcare professional if you need it (for example a physiotherapist, podiatrist or other musculoskeletal specialist). **Please note, this service is not for people who need a home visit which should be arranged by your doctor.**

Q. What will happen when I call 0845 604 0001?



You will speak to a trained call operator and be asked a series of questions normally lasting less than 10 minutes. The questions have been carefully prepared by healthcare professionals with specialist knowledge of these types of problems.

Q. Why are there so many questions?

You might think some questions seem unrelated to your problem, but for your safety, we ask everybody the same questions. We also ask about employment. We do this as there are some special healthcare support schemes funded to help people stay at, or get back to work.

Q. What happens at the end of the call?

Every caller will be directed to key information, videos and exercise tips to help you to get back to normal. In addition, depending on the replies given, a caller may also be offered a referral either to:

- Their local healthcare professional
- Special employment support services

Q. Why isn't everyone offered face-to-face treatment?

Many muscle, back or joint problems settle in about six weeks especially if you follow good advice.

Q. I called and followed the advice given but I'm not getting better. What else can I do?

If you have followed the key advice and information for **2 weeks** and nothing has changed then call us back on **0845 604 0001**.

Q. What will happen if I am referred to my local service?

Your details are sent electronically and arrive immediately at your local service. They will contact you as soon as they can, asking you to phone to make an appointment.

Q. I haven't heard about my appointment. Who do I contact?

Waiting times for appointments do vary between different places. If you require further information contact your local service. **(Please give them a couple of weeks before calling)**

Referral Centre: 01224 553333

Q. I am better and feel I don't need my appointment anymore. Who do I contact?

Please call the number above to let them know that you no longer need the appointment.

Q. If my problem is getting worse or I don't want to call 0845 604 0001 what should I do?

You should contact your GP.