



FUNCTIONAL REHABILITATION CLASS

You don't always need special equipment to exercise, and a lot of things can be done around your home, using apps, YouTube videos, DVDs, and your own furniture.

It's important to be comfortable when you're active, and this includes having the right clothing and footwear. This doesn't mean you need to spend money on specialist fitness wear, but wearing loose fitting clothes while you exercise will help you move. Try not to choose anything too baggy, as you don't want to wear anything that might get in the way.

It's a good idea to have some well-fitting, comfortable footwear too. This may be trainers which offer support and help absorb any shocks and protect your joints, especially if you're doing quite strenuous exercise.

Keeping hydrated helps our bodies keep cool, so it's important to make sure you drink plenty of water before, during and after exercise to reduce the risk of dehydration.

REST OR STAY ACTIVE?

The old fashioned treatment for pain was prolonged rest. But bed rest for more than a day or two is not good, because:

- Your bones get weaker.
- Your muscles get weaker.
- You get stiff.
- You lose physical fitness.
- You get depressed.
- The pain feels worse.
- It is harder and harder to get going again.

No wonder it didn't work! We no longer use bed rest to treat any common condition.

Of course, you might need to do a bit less when the pain is bad. But the most important thing is to get moving again as soon as you can.

ACTIVITY IS GOOD

Use it or lose it

Your body must keep active to stay healthy. It thrives on use.

Regular exercise and physical activity:

- Gives you stronger bones.
- Develops fit active muscles.
- Keeps you supple.
- Makes you fit.

Information for Patients

- Makes you feel good.
- Releases natural chemicals which reduce pain.

Even when you're having a bad day, you can make a start without putting too much stress on your body.

- Walking
- Swimming
- Exercise bike
- Dancing/yoga/keep fit
- In fact, continue most daily activities and hobbies even if your pain slows you down a bit.

How do I stay motivated?

It can be difficult to stay motivated once you start being active but there are a few things you can do to help you keep moving:

- Do an activity that you enjoy.
- [Set realistic goals](#) – and remember that it's normal for these to change as your condition changes.
- Do it regularly so it becomes a habit.
- Try being active with a family member or friend.
- Remember to reward yourself when you reach your goals.

It's important to start off slowly and gradually build up, as if you start too fast you might find the activity painful and be put off.

To build up your activity, try to gradually increase the following:

- frequency - how often you do it
- duration - the length of time you spend exercising
- intensity - how hard you try.

Exercise gets you moving again by keeping muscles and joints from getting too stiff or from seizing up. Exercise improves physical fitness and makes you look better.

When you start to exercise you may need to build up gradually over a few days or weeks. You should then exercise regularly and keep it up – fitness takes time. Different exercises suit different people. Find out what suits you best. Rearrange your life to get some exercise every day. Try walking instead of going by car or bus. Some of the easiest activities to get back to are walking, swimming, cycling and smooth rhythmic exercises. The important thing is general exercise and physical fitness.

Getting your stiff joints and muscles working again can be painful. Athletes accept that when they start training, their muscles and joints ache and hurt. This does not mean they are doing any damage, and the same applies to you and your back.

Information for Patients

No-one pretends exercising is easy. Painkillers and other treatments can help to control the pain to let you get started, but you still have to do the work. It often does hurt at first, but one thing is sure: the longer you put off exercise the harder and more painful it will be. There is no other way. **You have a choice: rest and get worse, or get active and recover.**

Our commitment to confidentiality

We keep personal and clinical information about you to ensure you receive appropriate care and treatment. Everyone working in the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential.

We will share information with other parts of the NHS to support your healthcare needs, and we will inform your GP of your progress unless you ask us not to. If we need to share information that identifies you with other organisations we will ask for your consent. You can help us by pointing out any information in your records which is wrong or needs updating.

Additional Sources of Information:

Go online and view NHS Choices website for more information about a wide range of health topics <http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx>

You may want to email our Health Information Centre:

Health.Informationcentre@uhb.nhs.uk.

Dear Patient

We welcome your views on what you thought of this patient information leaflet, also any suggestions on how you feel we can improve through our feedback link below:

- Patient Information Feedback email: PatientInformation.LeafletFeedback@uhb.nhs.uk

If you wish to make any other comments this can be done through the links listed below:

- Patient Opinion: www.patientopinion.org.uk
- I want great care: www.iwantgreatcare.org (Here you can leave feedback about your doctor)

Be helpful and respectful: think about what people might want to know about our patient information and this hospital and how your experiences might benefit others. Remember your words must be polite and respectful, and you cannot name individuals on the sites.

If you have any questions you may want to ask about your condition or your treatment or if there is anything you do not understand and you wish to know more about please write them down and your doctor will be more than happy to try and answer them for you.