

# Care navigation

## criteria for booking appointments with First Contact Physiotherapists

The role of First Contact Physiotherapists (FCPs) in Primary Care is to assess patients with soft tissue, muscle and joint pain and to decide on the most appropriate management pathway. FCPs are physiotherapists with expertise in the assessment and management of Musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions. They may also be known as Advanced Practice Physiotherapists (APP) or MSK Practitioners.

If you are unsure where to direct a patient, please discuss with your FCP and they will be happy to advise you.

### Inclusion Criteria

- All soft tissue injuries, sprains, strains or sports injuries
- Arthritis – any joint
- Possible problems with muscles, ligaments, tendons or bone, eg tennis elbow, carpal tunnel syndrome, ankle sprains
- Spinal pain including lower back pain, mid-back pain and neck pain
- Spinal-related pain in arms or legs, including nerve symptoms, eg pins and needles or numbness
- Post-orthopaedic surgery (can differ between localities)

### Exclusion Criteria

- Acutely unwell
- Children under 16
- Medical management of rheumatoid conditions
- Women's health, antenatal and postnatal problems
- House-bound patients
- Medication reviews for non-MSK conditions
- Neurological and respiratory conditions
- Headaches
- Acute mental health crises
- Patients who do not want to see a FCP

# The patient journey

Do you have a problem that affects your neck, back, bones, joints or muscles?

YES

NO

Book  
with  
GP

Are you feeling unwell at the moment?

NO

YES

Book  
with  
GP

Would you be happy to see a physiotherapist rather than the GP?

Book  
with  
**FCP**

YES

NO

Book  
with  
GP