



**North Tees and Hartlepool**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# **Back to Fitness Exercise and Education Class**

## **Information for patients**

This leaflet can be made available in other formats including large print, CD and Braille and in languages other than English, upon request.

This leaflet tells you about the 'Back to Fitness' exercise class which has been designed by North Tees and Hartlepool Foundation Trust Physiotherapists to help manage your lower back pain.

## **Why do I need to come to this class?**

To enable you to increase your fitness and activity levels to help you achieve your goals. It aims to increase your confidence to exercise on your own at home. You will have the correct advice and guidance so you can manage your own lower back and improve the quality of your life.

## **How long will the class last?**

The class will last 1 ½ hours and will run over a 7 week period. This will take place in a gym and you will be asked to wear clothes suitable for exercise, for example, training shoes, tracksuit bottoms, not overly loose fitting clothing.

There will be facilities provided for water breaks during exercise, but you may wish to bring your own bottle of water.

## **What does the 'Back to Fitness' class involve?<sup>1</sup>**

During the class all exercises are adapted to your needs and you will be expected to take part in physical exercise. Some of the exercises may include:

- Treadmill
- Exercise Bike
- Weights
- Cross Trainer
- Gym Ball
- Squat /Lunge

There will be an education part to the class. This will give you advice on how best to manage low back pain.

Topics included are:

- Activity pacing
- Explaining why you have pain
- Understanding how to progress exercises
- General Exercise Education – How often? How long? What Type?
- Relaxation and Sleep Techniques.

**While waiting to attend the ‘Back to Fitness Class’ please continue to follow the ‘Golden Rules’ of back pain.**

## **Golden Rules<sup>2</sup>**

1. Keep moving, even if slowly at first.
2. Keep living and working normally.
3. Avoid bed rest during the day.
4. Exercise.
5. Move around for 1 minute every waking hour.
6. Don't be afraid to take ‘over the counter’ pain relief.
7. Stay active and remember to reintroduce activities like heavy lifting gradually.
8. Improve your sleep.

# Why do I need to do exercise?<sup>3</sup>

## Physical activity benefits for adults and older adults

- + BENEFITS HEALTH
- Zzz IMPROVES SLEEP
- 🏆 MAINTAINS HEALTHY WEIGHT
- 🌿 MANAGES STRESS
- 😊 IMPROVES QUALITY OF LIFE

REDUCES YOUR CHANCE OF

Type II Diabetes	<b>-40%</b>
Cardiovascular Disease	<b>-35%</b>
Falls, Depression and Dementia	<b>-30%</b>
Joint and Back Pain	<b>-25%</b>
Cancers (Colon and Breast)	<b>-20%</b>

### What should you do?

For a healthy heart and mind

**Be Active**

To keep your muscles, bones and joints strong

**Sit Less**

To reduce your chance of falls

**Build Strength**

**VIGOROUS**

RUN

SPORT

STAIRS

**MODERATE**

WALK

CYCLE

SWIM

**SIT LESS**

TV

SOFA

COMPUTER

**BUILD STRENGTH**

GYM

YOGA

CARRY BAGS

**IMPROVE BALANCE**

DANCE

TAI CHI

BOWLS

MINUTES PER WEEK

75 OR 150

**VIGOROUS INTENSITY**

(BREATHING FAST  
DIFFICULTY TALKING)

**MODERATE INTENSITY**

(INCREASED BREATHING  
ABLE TO TALK)

OR A COMBINATION OF BOTH

BREAK UP  
SITTING  
TIME

2

DAYS PER WEEK

Something is better than nothing.

Start small and build up gradually:  
just 10 minutes at a time provides benefit.

MAKE A START TODAY: it's never too late!

Research shows improved sleep helps low back pain.<sup>4,5</sup>

# Tips to help improve your sleep

## 1. Reduce your caffeine intake (Tea, Coffee, Cola, Chocolate)

- Caffeine reduces melatonin hormone this helps you get to sleep.
- Reduce daily caffeine intake. No caffeine after 12 noon.

## 2. Reduce alcohol

While it may help you get off to sleep, it reduces the quality of your sleep.

## 3. Have a sleep routine – use an alarm clock, if needed.

Going to sleep and waking at a set time allows your internal body clock to set a routine. You will find getting to sleep a lot easier.

## 4. Reduce light exposure 1 hour before bed.

Light tricks your brain into thinking it is morning. This reduces the hormone melatonin which is key to get off to sleep.

- Dim lights leading up to going to bed.
- Don't look at TV, computers and smart phones.

## 5. Optimal bedroom conditions

- Cool room helps sleep as it simulates night time conditions.
- Lock out any light with blackout blinds or a facemask.

## 6. Can not switch off / Overthinking / Watching Clock

- Busy mind, and a restless body - Try a notebook.
- Turn the clock around, or put it somewhere you can not see it.
- Try ear plugs or drown out the noise.

## 7. Food

- Do not go to bed on a full stomach.
- Eating 2 Kiwi fruits 1 hour before bed – this increased melatonin hormone which helps you get to sleep.

# What if I can get to sleep but wake and cannot settle?

You should try getting out of bed and sitting downstairs with a dim light on and read. Try relaxation and once you begin to feel tired go back to bed.

## Suggested Exercises

(ONLY to be completed if discussed with your Physiotherapist)

### 1. Knee Hugs



PHYSIO<sup>TEC</sup>



PHYSIO<sup>TEC</sup>

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Lift one leg at a time towards your chest. Pull both knees towards your chest as far as you can and then hold. Slowly lower one leg at a time to starting position.

**Repetition: x 5**

**Hold: 30 - 45 seconds**

**Daily: x 3**

## 2. Knee Rolls/ Lumbar Rotations



PHYSIOEC



PHYSIOEC

Lay on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Slowly drop your knees sideways while keeping them together until you feel a stretch.

**Repetition: x5 Left & Right    Hold: 30-45 seconds    Daily: x 3**

## 3. Sit to Stand



PHYSIOEC



PHYSIOEC

Sit on a chair that has been placed against a wall to prevent it from moving. Fold your arms across your chest. With your feet slightly apart, lean forward so your shoulders are over your feet, squeeze your bottom and stand up by driving through your heels.

**Repetition: x10**

**Sets: x 3**

**Daily: x 3**

## 4. High Knees or Marching on Spot



Stand up with your feet hip-width apart and feet facing forwards. March on the spot, lifting your knees as high as able. Keep your body in an upright position when completing the exercise.

**Repetition: x10 Left - Right      Sets: x 3      Daily: x 3**

## 5. Forward Partial Lunge



Stand and step forward keeping your chest upright. Bend the front leg, and keep the knee cap in line with 2nd toe. Slightly bend the back knee and ensure the front knee is not over your toes. Push back up to the starting position.

**Repetition: x10      Left & Right Sets: x 3      Daily: x 3**

## 6. Step and Reach



PHYSIOEC



PHYSIOEC

Start with feet hip-distance apart. Reach up and across your body towards the opposite shoulder and allow your head to follow. Then return to the centre and repeat on the other side.

**Repetition: x10 Left & Right**

**Sets: x 3**

**Daily: x 3**

### Where are the 'Back to Fitness Classes' held?

- Hartlepool - The Luminary Gym within Hartlepool College of Further Education, Stockton Street, Hartlepool. TS24 7LB.
- Stockton - Tatchell Centre, University Hospital of North Tees, Stockton. TS19PE
- Billingham Forum Leisure Centre, Queensway, Billingham. TS23 2LJ.

You will have discussed with your Physiotherapist which class you wish to attend and you will have been placed on a waiting list. The Physiotherapist taking the class will either send you a letter or you will receive a telephone call when there is an available slot to attend.

## Contact numbers

If you are unable to attend the class or have any queries prior to attending. Please contact:

### North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

#### Physiotherapy Administration Team

Telephone: 01429 522471

Monday – Friday, 8.30am – 4.30pm

### Further information is available from:

**Video link** to help you understand how to manage back pain.

- NorthumbriaNHS (2018) - Managing backpain  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gFFboq5VnM&feature=youtu.be>

**Website** to help you understand pain.

- Retrain Pain Foundation (2018)  
<http://www.retrainpain.org/>

**Video link** which explains pain in 5 minutes

- Explain Pain in 5 minutes  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5KrUL8tOaQs&t=8s>

**Website link** to help sleep

- Seven steps to help sleep  
<https://sleepcouncil.org.uk/seven-steps-to-a-better-nights-sleep/>

## References

1. National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) (2016) Low back pain and sciatica in over 16s: assessment and management. (NICE guideline NG59). Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng59>. (Accessed: 1st October 2018.)
2. NHS Commissioning Board (2018) North of England Regional Back Pain Programme (NERBPP) Available at: <http://www.noebackpainprogramme.nhs.uk>. Accessed: 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018
3. UK Chief Medical Officers Guidelines (2011) Start Active, Stay Active: A report on physical activity for health from the four home countries' Chief Medical Office. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/216370/dh\\_128210.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/216370/dh_128210.pdf). (Accessed on: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018)
4. Nødtvedt, Ø.O., Hansen, A.L., Bjorvatn, B. and Pallesen, S., (2017) The effects of kiwi fruit consumption in students with chronic insomnia symptoms: a randomized controlled trial. *Sleep and Biological Rhythms*, 15(2), pp.159-166.
5. The Sleep Council Organisation (2017) Seven Steps to get a better night's sleep. Available at: <https://sleepcouncil.org.uk/seven-steps-to-a-better-nights-sleep/> (Accessed on: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018)

This leaflet has been produced in partnership with patients and carers. All patient leaflets are regularly reviewed, and any suggestions you have as to how it may be improved are extremely valuable. Please write to the Quality Assurance Team, University Hospital of North Tees or email: [patientinformation@nth.nhs.uk](mailto:patientinformation@nth.nhs.uk)

## **Comments, Concerns, Compliments or Complaints**

We are continually trying to improve the services we provide.

We want to know what we're doing well or if there's anything which we can improve, that's why the Patient Experience Team is here to help.

Our Patient Experience Team is here to try to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible. If you would like to contact or request a copy of our PET leaflet, please contact:

telephone: 01642 624719

Monday – Friday, 9.00am – 4.00pm

Messages can be left on the answering machine and will be picked up throughout the day.

freephone: 0800 092 0084

Email: [patientexperience@nth.nhs.uk](mailto:patientexperience@nth.nhs.uk)

Out of hours if you wish to speak to a senior member of Trust staff, please contact the hospital switchboard who will bleep the appropriate person.

telephone: 01642 617617

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Patient Experience Team is available to discuss your concerns in person Monday – Friday, 1.30pm – 4.30pm. The office is based on the ground floor at the University Hospital of North Tees.

## **Data Protection and use of patient information**

The Trust has developed a Data Protection, Caldicott and Disclosure Policy (IG5) in accordance with the Data Protection Legislation (General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act 2018) and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. All of our staff respect this policy and confidentiality is adhered to at all times. If you require further information please contact the Information Governance Team.

telephone: 01642 383551 or email: [information.governance@nth.nhs.uk](mailto:information.governance@nth.nhs.uk)

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