

Herts Valleys Integrated Musculoskeletal Service

A guide for patients

**Are you suffering
from muscular or joint
pains?**

Our service brings together specialist musculoskeletal (MSK) clinicians to assess, diagnose and manage your condition at health centres, GP surgeries and gyms in your local community. We treat MSK conditions involving bones, soft tissues, muscles, joints and ligaments.

Our services:

Herts Valleys Integrated Musculoskeletal (iMSK) Service is for people with musculoskeletal conditions. Our team includes specialist clinicians covering all musculoskeletal specialist areas, who can provide a comprehensive assessment and a range of treatments and management plans in a community setting.

We want to get you an appointment with the right person quickly, to manage your condition as early as possible.


How do I make an appointment?

- Make an appointment to see your GP and your GP will refer you into the new service
- Once the referral is complete, you will be contacted by our Referral Management Centre, to arrange your first appointment.

What should I expect?

Your initial appointment will most likely involve a telephone assessment by a physiotherapist. These calls usually last about 20 minutes and will be from a withheld number.

They will ask questions about your condition and general health in-order to make a provisional diagnosis, provide instant advice and plan your care accordingly.



Other services

**Direct Access in
GP Surgeries**

Group Exercise

Services

As part of the Herts Valleys Integrated Musculoskeletal Service, Connect will deliver the following:

- Rehabilitation
- Physiotherapy
- Hand Therapy
- Rheumatology
- Pain Service
- Chronic Fatigue Service
- Postural Stability(Falls) Rehabilitation



Clinical Specialists

Self-management

Physiotherapy

Your treatment plan may include a variety of specialist treatments which will be discussed with you and delivered in a clinic or group setting to help you to return to your usual activities. Your treatment plan will also include advice and specific exercises to help you self-manage your condition.

What to wear:

During your assessment you may be required to carry out a number of movements to determine the cause of your pain. Therefore, we recommend you wear suitable loose fitting clothing, such as t-shirt, shorts, jogging bottoms and underwear that you are comfortable being assessed in. Chaperones are available on request

Where will I be seen?

The clinics are located in local health centres and some GP practices within the community across Herts Valley. You will be offered the earliest appointment available but you will also be given a choice of venues so you can choose a location which is best for you.

What if I need to go to hospital?

If it is necessary for you to have an operation or see a consultant at a hospital, this will be discussed with you. You will then be able to choose which hospital you wish to be treated in and a referral will be arranged through our support team.

For further information on our service please visit

<https://hv.connecthealth.co.uk/>

Important information:

- **Patients under 18 years-old:**
This service is only available to Patients aged 18 years or older.
- **Patients with additional needs:**
If the Patient is vulnerable, or has a disability, or mobility problems, then please advise us when you book their appointment.
- **Translation Support:**
If you require a translator, please advise us which language when you book your appointment.
- **Keep us informed:**
If you need to change or cancel your appointment, please call the service **at least 48 hours prior to your appointment**, so it can be offered to someone else. This keeps patient waiting times low and helps to reduce NHS costs.
- **Don't be a DNA:**
If you **Do Not Attend (DNA)** or you are late to your appointment without notifying us, you may be discharged from this service.
- **Diagnostic Tests:**
Your clinician may require you to have diagnostic tests (e.g. blood-samples, X-Rays, MRI Scans). You may be required to attend a walk-in clinic, or we may request the test for you.
Diagnostic tests may take up to 8 weeks and we monitor your progress throughout the diagnostic process, so there is no need to call us earlier than this.

Patient and GP support

Our support team is here to help you, if you have any queries or questions regarding your care, then please call **01442 913 356**

Lines are open Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 5.00pm.

Data protection and patient confidentiality

Patients and Clinicians can be assured that the protection of privacy and confidentiality are given the highest priority, with all personal information being collected, held and used in strict compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018.

Comments, complaints and suggestions

Herts Valleys Integrated MSK Service encourages feedback from its patients on their experiences with the services they have received.

If you wish to make a suggestion, compliment or a complaint about any part of the service, then please call the Referral Management Centre on **01442 913 356** and they will direct your call, or access further information on how to do so via our website:

<https://hertsvalleys.connecthealth.co.uk/contact-us/>