

For pain in your coccyx

Advice

In general, coccyx injuries are due to a direct impact from a fall onto your bottom. The severity of the injury can range from a bruise to a fracture. Some sports, such as cycling or rowing, can increase the risk of coccyx pain due to repetitive pressure or friction on the coccyx. Nerve compression or a bone spur may also result in pain in the area of the coccyx. Most coccyx injuries heal on their own given time and self-management. Because coccyx injuries can be painful, conservative home-treatment is used to reduce pain and help you avoid further injury.

What can I do to help?

Pain relief: Simple painkillers (like paracetamol) or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, NSAIDS, (like ibuprofen) are available over the counter and can be very effective but don't use them for more than 2 weeks without seeking medical advice. You should carefully read the Patient Information Leaflet that is provided with this medication.

It is advisable to consult your GP or pharmacist before taking additional pain relief if you are currently:

- taking any form of medication
- have any other pre-existing medical conditions
- pregnant

Posture: Patients are advised to avoid sitting for long periods of time, so if you can stand during the day, that is recommended. If you must sit, leaning forwards as you do so will take some of the pressure off your coccyx. Some people find sitting on a 'coccyx cushion', which has a section removed in the middle, helpful to avoid weight bearing on the coccyx while sitting.

Heat: Using a heat pack or hot water bottle against the area of pain in your back can help settle symptoms. Apply for up to 20 mins. Wrap in a tea-towel to prevent burns.

Exercise: Exercise is one of the most effective ways of treating back pain. Research shows that bed rest for more than a couple of days doesn't help back pain and in the long term actually makes it worse as the muscles in your back become weak. The following exercises are designed to increase the flexibility of your back and strengthen your core stability muscles.

Exercises to try:

Please try each one 2-10 times each hour. Some discomfort is normal as you may be moving muscles which are tight or stiff. Please stop them if they aggravate your pain.

1. Extension facing a wall



Stand, leaning against a wall with your feet 30cm (1 foot) from the wall, as demonstrated in the picture. Push your stomach and pelvis towards the wall and hold for 5 seconds. Return to the start position and repeat 2-3 times each hour. (Note- if your stomach touches the wall, move your feet backwards a little for the next stretch.)

2. Knee Rolls



Lie on your back, with your knees bent and your feet on the floor. Gently roll your knees to one side, return to centre, and then roll your knees to the opposite side.