Coccyx Pain

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?

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.

Ice: Ice can be applied to the coccyx area for up to 20 minutes at a time, several times throughout the day. A packet of frozen peas wrapped in a tea towel can be an effective icepack.

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 for helping with pain and swelling, but don’t use them for more than 2 weeks without seeking medical advice.

If you are currently taking any form of medication, it is advisable to consult your GP or pharmacist before taking additional pain relief.

Exercises: It is important to keep your lumbar spine moving normally. These exercises will help to gently maintain or regain normal movement.

1. Extension Facing Wall

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

2. Side Flexion in Standing

   Stand with your arms by your side. Slowly slide one hand down the outside of your leg so you feel a stretch. Slowly return to the upright position and repeat to the opposite side. Repeat 2-3 times every hour.