



Major Trauma Rehabilitation Booklet

information to help optimise
Your recovery



Introduction

This information booklet is designed to assist you with your recovery following your injury and will cover the following topics:

- Pain
- Pacing
- Sleep Hygiene
- Goals Setting and Expectations
- Psychological management
- Patient resources

Useful Contacts:

St George's Physiotherapy Department: 0208 725 1357

St Johns Therapy Centre Physiotherapy Department:
02088124018

St George's Orthopaedic Department: 0208 725 2787

St Georges Trauma and Orthopaedics Physiotherapy Department: 0208 725 0985

Useful resources:

Pain:

[Living with Pain Resources - International Association for the Study of Pain \(IASP\) \(iasp-pain.org\)](https://www.iasp-pain.org/)



[Home - Live Well With Pain](#)



Sleep:

- www.livewellwithpain.co.uk/resources/resources-for-your-patients/sleep-well-with-pain
- www.sleepfoundation.org/mental-health/trauma-and-sleep

Pacing:

[Pacing – a really useful skill for people with pain - Live Well With Pain](#)



Exercise and Physical Activity:

[10-minute workouts - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/)



[Homepage - Moving Medicine](#)



Psychological management

Experiencing a traumatic event can affect your thoughts and feelings as well as what you do and how your body feels. All of these are normal and understandable. They are not permanent and can change for the better with time.

Common responses to trauma:

- Feeling anxious, frightened, or panicky.
- Feeling uptight, on edge, on guard
- Feeling irritable, angry
- Feeling unreal, numb or detached,
- Feeling down, sad, low in mood, tearful
- Feeling guilty, regretful or ashamed

Coping after a traumatic event:

- **Recognise:** that you have been through a distressing experience and give yourself permission to experience some reaction to it. Don't be angry with yourself for being upset.
- **Routine:** Develop a routine. Keep busy and structure your day.
- **Distraction:** Find new activities you enjoy: e.g. watch TV, listen to music or a podcast, do puzzles/crosswords/brain games.
- **Practice relaxation:** deep breathing, visualisation, progressive muscle relaxation.
- **Exercise and fresh air:** even a short amount of exercise e.g. stretching or going for a walk in the fresh air, can help clear your mind and help you to feel more relaxed.
- **Graded exposure:** break down overwhelming tasks into smaller parts then gradually build up.
- **Look after yourself:** Take time to care for yourself- eat proper meals, self-care, allow yourself time to rest and sleep.
- **Connect:** with other people and allow them to support you.

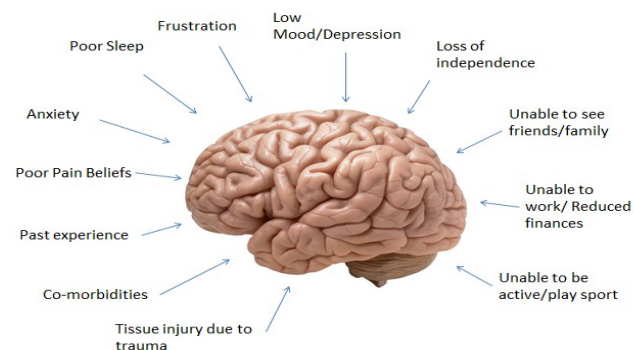
Pain

What is Pain ?

'An unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage.'

- Pain protects and alerts to danger which is essential to survival.
- It makes you move, think and behave differently, which makes it helpful in the **ACUTE** stages of tissue healing.
- Pain is complex and affected by many factors, not just tissue injury, see diagram below:

What can affect your pain ?



- ⇒ sometimes pain can persist even when tissues have healed, this is known as persistent pain. This is normally lasts longer than 6 months, more wide spread and associated with worry, low mood and reduced function. **If you are worried about this please contact your physiotherapist and see resources with more information on this subject in the resource section of this booklet.**

Pain and Rehabilitation

knowing when to push through pain or not, can be confusing and worrying. Below is the pain and rehabilitation traffic light, this can guide you when you may need to seek help or keep calm and carry on:

Pain and Rehabilitation



**New Pain, Unable to bear weight
Significant increase during or following exercise 7-10/10
Hot, Red, Swelling
STOP EXERCISE DISCUSS WITH THERAPIST**

Moderate increase in same pain during or following exercise but settles with in 2-4 hours. 4-6/10
CONTINUE EXERCISE, ADAPT VARIABLE, DISCUSS WITH THERAPIST

None or slight increase in pain during or following exercise that settles in 30 minutes. 1-3/10
CONTINUE EXERCISE DISCUSS WITH THERAPIST WHEN TO PROGRESS

POST EXERCISE MUSCLE ACHING/SORENESS IS NORMAL

Goal Setting and Expectations

A Goal should be something that you want to do and aim to achieve.

Choose goals that are important to you, that will be challenging but are realistic. Make an action plan for how you achieve your goals.



Make an action plan, but realistic!

- * My goal for this week is to?
 - * When will I do it?
 - * Where will I do it?
- * How much/ how long for?



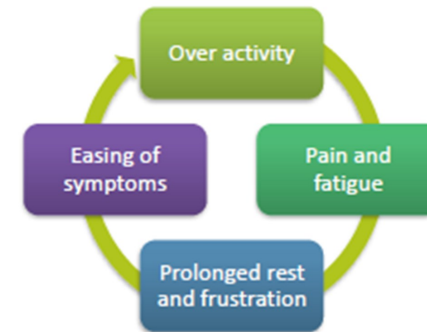
Sleep Hygiene

- ⇒ Sleep issues are common after a traumatic event, including difficulties falling asleep, waking during the night and falling back to sleep
- ⇒ Distressing dreams and flashbacks are also common
- ⇒ Good sleep has been shown to reduce the risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and distressing memories
- ⇒ Studies have also shown that sleep deprivation has the potential to increase pain
- ⇒ Most sleep issues resolve on their own, but here are some tips which can help as you recover from your trauma:

1. Maintain your usual sleep schedule; wake and sleep at the same time each day (anywhere from 5-10 hours is a normal nights' sleep)
2. Sleep where you feel safe
3. Engage the relaxation response; simple techniques can help quieten the mind
4. Don't force sleep
5. Understand that your symptoms may be normal



Pacing



- Understanding pacing helps you to find ways to balance activities and build in breaks to aid recovery.
- Over time pacing can help you to achieve more with fewer setbacks.
- If you are underactive, steadily pace yourself towards more activity. If you are overactive, you need to plan and use more rest and relaxation.
- Prioritising is a vital part of pacing skills. Aim to plan each day's activities around what is most important to achieve.
- Explore the effort and speed that you need to perform your activities, take breaks and be prepared to fine-tune your pacing.
- Experiment with a regular Daily Plan to find a balance between activities and rest or relaxation