

Physiotherapy Department, Women's Centre

Physiotherapy advice and exercises after a 3rd or 4th degree tear during childbirth



Ways to look after yourself and help the healing of the tear:

1. **Keep the area clean:**

- Bath or gently shower daily.
- Change your sanitary pad regularly.
- Rinse with water from front to back after going to the toilet and dry carefully.

2. **Avoid constipation.** Drink at least 2-3 litres of water every day and eat a healthy, balanced diet (fruit, vegetables, oats, etc.).

3. Avoid lifting anything heavier than baby for at least 6 weeks.

4. Do pelvic floor exercises within your comfort range. (See our leaflet entitled "Your recovery after childbirth".) Start these gently the day after birth. They will aid the healing process and help reduce perineal pain by increasing the circulation of blood to the area.

5. **Physiotherapy treatment**

Whilst you are on the postnatal ward a member of the physiotherapy team will visit you to discuss the above exercises and advice in detail. They will also arrange an outpatient appointment in approximately 8 weeks, if necessary.

If you miss seeing a physiotherapist before you are discharged (e.g. at a weekend, on a bank holiday) you should be contacted by the department to arrange outpatient treatment.

Further information

If after leaving hospital you are expecting to hear from us and this does not happen, or if you have any problems with pain, incontinence or returning to sexual intercourse please contact us.

To call the Physiotherapy Department in the Women's Centre please phone **01865 235 383**.

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

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