



**Countess of  
Chester Hospital**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# **Vaginal or Ano-rectal examination leaflet**

**Therapy services - Intimate examinations**



You have been referred to Physiotherapy by your Consultant Gynaecologist or Colorectal Surgeon. As part of the physiotherapy assessment it may be necessary to perform an anal or vaginal examination. This will be to assess muscle tone, sphincter damage, or severity of a prolapse. Any member of the medical professions who undertake these examinations should be wearing an identity badge with their name, including a photograph. You may ask to see it if you wish. These health professionals who have been trained to perform intimate examinations are also trained to maintain your hygiene, safety, dignity and confidence. An internal examination performed in a sensitive manner should not be painful.

## **Where will it be done?**

You will be examined behind a closed/lockable door – not in a curtained cubicle.

## **Who will be there?**

You will be examined by a female physiotherapist who has specialised in pelvic health and continence promotion.

If you wish to have a chaperone present this can be arranged for a future appointment date when a second physiotherapist can be on hand to act as chaperone. Relatives/friends cannot be considered as chaperones (but you are welcome to bring them along to your appointment). The Physiotherapist will mention the need for an intimate examination on your first visit (to gain your verbal consent to be examined). If you wish to have a chaperone, ask your Physiotherapist at this point.

## What should I do?

First you will be given the opportunity to use the bathroom. Please remove your trousers, tights and underwear. Ladies may keep a skirt on.

**For a vaginal examination**, recline on your back on the examination couch with knees bent and apart, similar to the position adopted for a cervical smear.

**For an anal sphincter examination**, you should lie on your left side with knees bent and drawn up towards your chest. You will be covered by a sheet for modesty. Try to relax.

## What will the therapist do?

- The therapist will briefly inspect (look at) the perineum to detect any soreness, dryness, scar tissue and muscle movement. An assessment is made of sensation in the genital area.
- Gently inserting 1 or 2 fingers into the anus or vagina to check for stitches, scar tissue, prolapse etc.
- You will be asked to squeeze (contract) the pelvic floor muscles on the examining finger. An assessment of the strength of this squeeze will be made, indicating your muscle tone.
- You will be asked to carry out long, slow and fast contractions of the pelvic floor
- You will be asked to cough and to bear down (push) to check for prolapse and muscle coordination.

- When the physical examination is complete you will be given feedback on muscle strength and on other findings or diagnoses. An indication of the likely success of following a pelvic floor exercise programme is shared with you. The therapist will explain any other treatments that would be beneficial. You will be given options or choices of treatment which you may accept or decline.

Your consent, muscle power and any other findings will be recorded in your treatment notes. The names of the physiotherapist and any student or chaperone present are also recorded.

**REMEMBER:** You are an active participant in your own treatment plan. Your wishes will be respected. No one in the medical professions can force you to have any procedure that you do not willingly consent to. However, lack of consent may make diagnosis and successful resolution of symptoms more difficult.

**AND FINALLY:**

If you have any reason to suspect that you will not tolerate the examination well, please have a quiet word with your physiotherapist.

Obstetric and Gynaecology Physiotherapists available:  
Monday – Friday 08:30-16:30  
Tel: 01244 365176



## If you require a special edition of this leaflet

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille, on compact disk and in other languages on request. Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on:

Telephone: **01244 366066**

or email: **cochpals@nhs.net**

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若是你想索取這份傳單的中文譯本，請聯絡「病人預約中心」或向其中一名職員查詢。

Si vous voulez cette brochure en français, contactez le bureau des rendez-vous ou demandez à un membre du personnel.

यदि आप यह परचा हिन्दी में लेना चाहते हैं तो कृपया पेशेंट अॅपाइन्टमेन्ट सेन्टर से संपर्क करें या किसी स्टाफ से पूछें।

Haddii aad jeclaan laheyd buug-yarahan oo af-Soomaali ku qoran la soo xiriir xarruunta bukaan ballaminta ama wax weydii xubin shaqaalaha ka tirsan.

Si desea recibir este folleto en español, sírvase contactar al Centro de Citas para Pacientes o solicitarlo al personal.

اگر آپ کو یہ کتابچہ اردو میں درکار ہے تو پیسٹ اپوائنٹمنٹ سینٹر یا عملے کے کسی رکن سے رابطہ قائم کریں۔

Mae'r daflen hon ar gael (ar gais), mewn print bras, ar dâp sain neu ar ddisg, ac efallai mewn ieithoedd eraill ar gais. Cysylltwch â chanolfan apwyntiadau cleifion i ofyn am gopi.

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