

Spasticity Clinic

You have been referred to the Consultant Physician in Rehabilitation Medicine and are invited to attend his monthly multi-disciplinary spasticity clinic to see if we can help you to manage your condition.

What is Spasticity?

Spasticity and spasms are symptoms often associated with multiple sclerosis, acquired brain injury, spinal cord injury and stroke. It occurs when nerve pathways connecting the brain spinal cord and muscles are disrupted.

Spasticity can be described as involuntary muscle stiffness and spasms as involuntary muscle contractions. Any muscle can be affected but spasticity and spasms tend to predominantly affect a person's limbs or trunk.

People with spasticity describe their muscles as feeling stiff, heavy and difficult to move. When very severe it can be very difficult to bend a limb at all and if a limb becomes fixed in one position it is known as a contracture. Other features associated with spasticity and spasms include pain, weakness and amble clonus (repetitive up and down movement of feet).

What Will Happen in Clinic?

- You will meet the Consultant Physician in Rehabilitation Medicine, Neuro Physiotherapist, Nurse Consultant and or Specialist Nurse who will ask you questions about your condition and the problems it

causes you in day to day life.

- You will be asked about your medications so it would be helpful if you could bring a list of these for us to see. You could write these down on the enclosed form if you wish.
- We know that some things make spasticity worse and we will ask you about these things. For example, do you have problems with your bladder, bowels or skin?
- We will ask you if you have ever had any splints or orthotics. Please bring any of these that you are currently using with you to clinic.
- We will also assess the spasticity by using simple measures. This may be by moving the limb/limbs or by asking you to describe the problems you face.
- Together, we will discuss the treatment options available and decide on the best way to manage your difficulties attributed by spasticity..

Treatment options that may be suggested

- Active and passive stretches and regular exercises;
- Splinting or corrective footwear;
- Managing factors that make the spasticity worse (relieving constipation, treating bladder problems, reducing pressure on skin);
- Postural management, for example improving

posture in a wheelchair or in bed at night;

- Oral medication to reduce spasticity or relieve pain;
- Botulinum Toxin injections for management of localised spasticity;
- In a few cases, more invasive treatment or surgical intervention may be suggested.

Working Together

Effective management of spasticity is a team effort. You and your family are part of the team.

It's therefore very important that you and/or your family or carers understand and participate in developing the treatment plan. When you leave the clinic, we will give you a copy of the treatment plan to keep and ask you to let us know when you next come to clinic, how effective it has been.

If you have any questions or concerns before attending the clinic, or after, please do not hesitate to contact us either by phone or letter.