

## Will I receive a follow up Physiotherapy Appointment?

You will receive a follow up [Physiotherapy Appointment](#) approximately **6 to 8 weeks** after your delivery.

This appointment can be held either at [Whiston or St Helens Hospital](#) so please read your letter carefully.

We strongly recommend you attend this appointment, even if you are not experiencing any problems at that stage.

## If I have problems what do I do?

If you do experience any problems, then speak to your Midwife, Doctor or Physiotherapist as soon as possible. You can contact the physiotherapy [Pelvic Health Physiotherapy Team](#) on 0151 430 1890 at Whiston or 01744 646 304 at St Helens.

Whiston Hospital  
Warrington Road,  
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR  
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

St Helens Hospital  
Marshall Cross Road,  
St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 3DA  
Telephone: 01744 26633

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[www.sthk.nhs.uk](http://www.sthk.nhs.uk)

# Advice following a Third/ Fourth Degree Tear

This leaflet can be made available  
in alternative languages / formats on request.

如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式  
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona  
w innych językach/formatach.

**Author:** Clinical Lead  
**Department:** Physiotherapy  
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## What is a third/fourth degree tear?

This is a tear extending from your vagina to your back passage which has occurred during the birth of your baby.

## What can I do to help myself?

Rest regularly during the first few days following the birth of your baby.

It is, however, important to maintain good circulation in your legs by carrying out the circulation exercises described on page 4 of your “Fit for Future” leaflet.

When feeding your baby find a comfortable position e.g. lying on your side.

Drink lots of fluids, especially water to help your stools stay soft and easy to pass.

You may feel anxious about opening your bowels for the first time, it is helpful to support yourself underneath from the front, with a maternity pad or some toilet paper. Do not strain.

Be sure to follow the midwife’s advice about personal hygiene.

## When can I start normal activities?

Take things easy for the first few weeks, as you feel more comfortable follow the advice in your “Fit for Future” leaflet.

## When do I start doing postnatal exercises?

Following a 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> degree tear it is important to carry out pelvic floor muscle exercises, these can be found in your “Fit for Future” leaflet (pages 6-7).

You may find it easier to begin with the fast (short) exercises, progressing to the slower, holding (long) exercises as you become more comfortable.

Remember to do the other exercises in your “Fit for Future” leaflet.

## What problems might I have afterwards?

You may experience some pain or discomfort following the tear, but should this become more severe seek advice.

If your pelvic floor muscles remain weak you may experience:

- Poor control of wind from your back passage
- An urgent need to empty your bowels and/or bladder
- Leakage from your bladder or bowels e.g. on coughing, sneezing and lifting.