



COVID-19 / Coronavirus Clinic Reopening for Face-to-Face Physiotherapy & Podiatry

Risk Assessment

June 2020 – updated 24/6/2020

RISKS

The clinic closed for face-to-face physiotherapy and podiatry treatments on 23rd March 2020. [Online remote consultations](#) have been available throughout the closure period, and continue to be available. However, there are now a number of patients requiring manual musculoskeletal physiotherapy and podiatry for conditions which cannot be treated via remote consultation, putting them at risk of developing serious issues which could require treatment at acute NHS settings if left for longer.

Social distancing at 2 metres is not possible whilst carrying out face-to-face physiotherapy and podiatry treatments, thus presenting the risk of transmission of coronavirus / COVID-19 in the clinic environment.

Identified Risks Faced:

1. Patients may pass coronavirus to clinicians and other patients.
2. Clinicians may pass coronavirus to patients and other clinicians.
3. Patients risk serious illness if clinical 'red flags' not identified and appropriate clinical action (treatment or further referral) carried out.

MITIGATING ACTIONS - HOW ARE WE KEEPING STAFF & PATIENTS SAFE?

To encourage social distancing, patients will be encouraged to consider telehealth options (telephone advice and video consultations) instead of face-to-face treatment throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Video consultation appointments are available to book easily through our online booking portal.

However, we recognise that for many patients telehealth does not meet their needs, and that face-to-face treatment in the clinic is more suitable. Patients will be triaged upon booking an appointment for face-to-face treatment – either over the phone, or via email – to ensure that face-to-face is the most appropriate way forward for them. Online booking will not be available for face-to-face appointments during this time.

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Patients will have to complete a [Consent & Risk Assessment Form](#) before attending the clinic to ensure that they understand the risks involved, and that they are screened for potential COVID-19 symptoms. Their clinician will be responsible for analysing their submission and making a professional assessment of the risk involved with their treatment. For their own protection, highly vulnerable patients will not be able to access face-to-face treatment in the clinic at this time, but this will be kept under review as the Government guidance changes. **The priority must be to keep the clinic environment a COVID-free zone. Regardless of their treatment needs, no patient who indicates on their submission that they or someone they live with or have had physical contact with have had COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test in the last 14 days shall be offered face-to-face treatment or permitted on the premises.**

Patients and staff will be made aware of JRM Physiotherapy's Guidelines on procedure changes (see below) in place to mitigate these risks, including the booking process, a one-way system through the clinic, hygiene, cleaning and PPE.

COVID-19 / Coronavirus adaptations to practice

June 2020 – amended 24th June 2020

Booking Process

1. Online booking for face-to-face appointments will be temporarily suspended to ensure that patients are able to be triaged over the phone or via email to determine whether face-to-face or online consultation is appropriate.
2. Sports massage appointments are not available at this time.
3. Patients must complete a [Risk Assessment & Consent Form](#) and answer all the questions prior to attending the clinic. This shall be sent to all patients as a link via text message and email prior to their appointment. For those unable to complete this online, paper forms will be available by the back door. Pens and clipboards should be disinfected after each use. Therapists must risk assess each patient based on these forms.

Clients must not be admitted to the clinic if they have indicated that they, any of their household, or anyone they have had physical contact with have had COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 infection test within the last 14 days.

Clients who refuse to complete the consent form should not be admitted to the clinic and will incur the full cost of the therapy session (if within 24 hours of appointment).

4. Patients are not permitted to bring anyone with them into the clinic. The car park is available for friends / carers to wait. Social distancing must be adhered to in the car park.

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Where a chaperone is essential, this must be identified on the Risk Assessment & Consent Form and have been discussed with their therapist, prior to attending the appointment. The chaperone's name, address and phone number should be included in the appointment notes to support Contact Track & Tracing.

5. No walk-in appointments are permitted. All patients must book via phone / email at least 24 hours in advance.
6. Patients who have been identified by the NHS as [extremely clinically vulnerable](#) / at greater risk of severe illness from COVID-19 / should be shielding should not be offered face-to-face treatment in the clinic at this time. This will be reviewed as Government guidance changes.
7. Cancellations due to ill health / COVID-19 symptoms will not incur the usual cancellation fee at this time.
8. Payment by debit / credit card is preferred (contactless where possible – the contactless limit has been increased to £45). Payments by cash should be in exact amount only.

Access to the Clinic

9. The waiting room is not in use. Patients must wait in the car park to the rear of the clinic, and enter the clinic through the back door only when instructed to do so by the therapist, who will go out and collect them when they are ready for their appointment.
10. Patients will leave the clinic by the front door only.
11. Patients are asked to wear a face covering or mask. Single use masks will be offered to patients upon arrival, or they may wear their own mask / face covering. Disposable masks must be taken away with the patient and not disposed of on the clinic premises.
12. Upon entry and exit patients must use the hand sanitiser (after putting on their mask).
13. Patients are permitted to bring their own water bottle with them which they must take with them when they leave the clinic. They are not permitted to bring any other food or drink onto the premises.

Staff Hygiene

14. All staff must wear a uniform which should be laundered after each shift, on its own at the maximum temperature for the garment (ideally 60 degrees).
15. Uniform is not to be worn outside the clinic – staff will change into clean uniform upon arrival and change out of uniform at the end of their shift before leaving.
16. Long hair should be tied up.

17. Hands should be washed with soap for at least 20 seconds in-between patients, before and after eating, and after using the bathroom. Hand sanitiser should also be used as much as possible to supplement hand-washing.
18. Food and drink should not be taken into the treatment rooms. Water is available from the water fountain.

Personal Protective Equipment

19. Staff will follow these guidelines for all patients:

- Disposable nitrile gloves (single-use, to be changed in between every patient.)
- Disposable plastic apron (single-use, changed in-between every patient)
- Fluid-repellent mask (IIR, N99 or FFP3) (sessional)
- Glasses and / or visor for close-proximity treatments (to be disinfected between patients)

Cleaning

20. Staff will ensure adequate disinfecting and donning / doffing time for PPE is left between appointments.
21. In between appointments, therapists will clean with disinfectant antiviral spray and antimicrobial wipes: Plinth / couch, stool / chair, keyboard, mouse, card machine, door handles, waterproof pillows, plus any equipment used. Plus after every use they will clean the door handles on the exterior doors, banisters, grab rails (front and back), bathroom facilities and kitchen area.
22. The clinic will be deep cleaned every weekend as usual.
23. Those accessing the toilet facilities should disinfect them using the antiviral wipes provided after use.
24. Ventilation by fresh air will be optimised.
25. Fabric towels will not be used within the clinic. Paper towels will be available and fresh couch roll will be used on the plinth and pillow for every patient.
26. All general waste bins will be emptied at the end of every day by the last therapist to use that room / the clinic.
27. Clinical waste must not be disposed of with the general waste, but placed in the yellow clinical waste bin.