

Information about

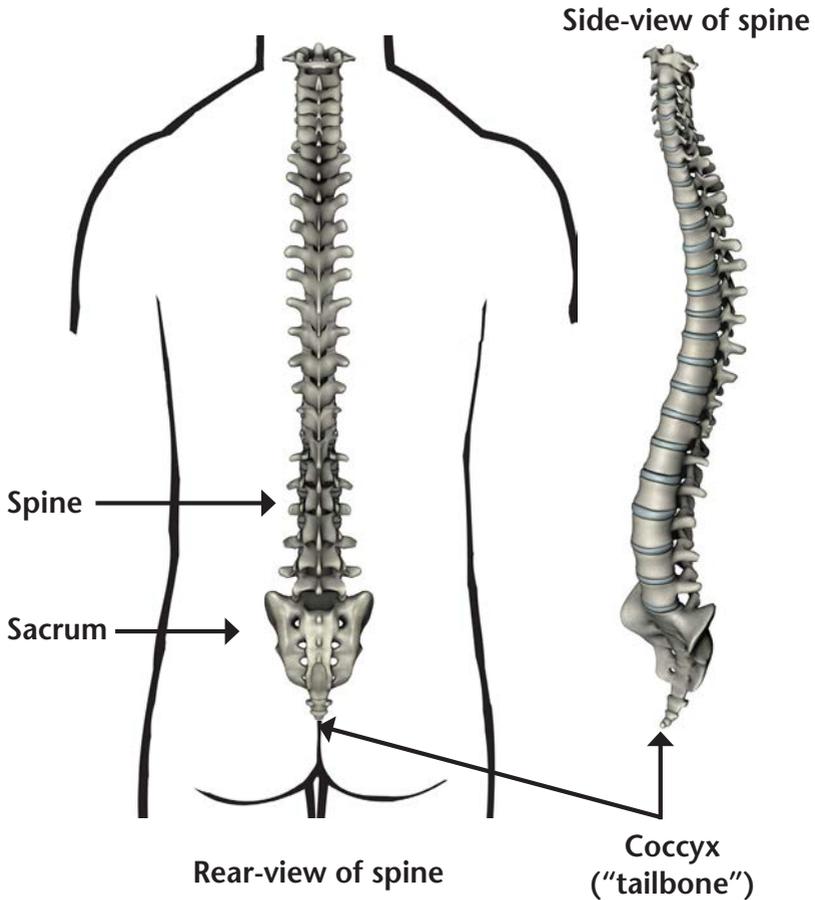
# Coccydynia



## What is Coccydynia?

We use the term Coccydynia to describe pain around the coccyx area. Sometimes we call it your 'tailbone.'

The coccyx is at the base of your spine and is found directly above the cleft of your buttocks. Many ligaments and muscles attach to it.



## **What are the Signs and Symptoms of Coccydynia?**

Pain may be worse:

- On sitting
- When sitting down or standing up
- When emptying your bowels
- When bending forward
- During sexual intercourse
- During your menstrual cycle

## **What are the Common Causes of Coccydynia?**

These include:

- A fall directly onto your tailbone or a direct blow to the coccyx
- Pregnancy
- Giving birth
- Previous Injury
- Hypermobility (increased movements at your joints)
- Prolonged pressure from poor sitting posture (for example sitting feeding your baby, driving, sitting at work and cycling).

## Self Help



- Avoid sitting for long periods
- Good posture (use lumbar roll)
- Lie on your side when resting to reduce the pressure on your coccyx



- Sit on an exercise ball as long as you feel comfortable
- Use a specialised pressure relieving coccyx cushion

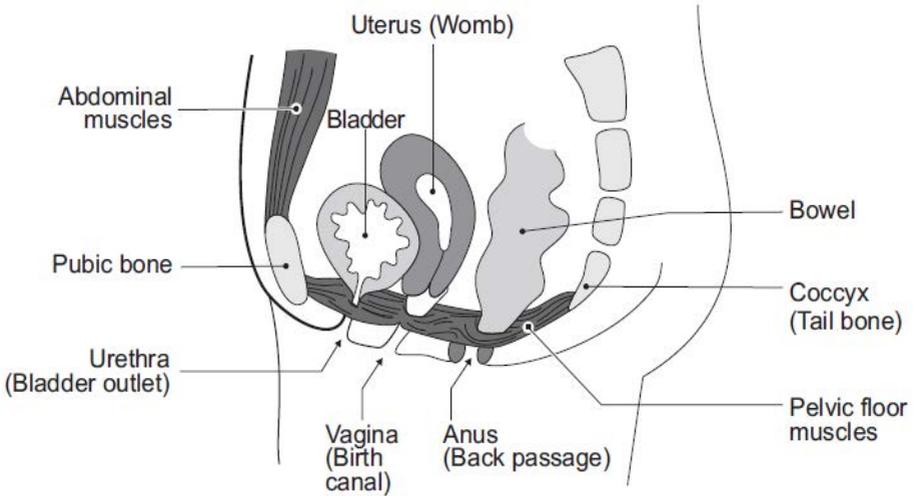


- Avoid constipation by:
  - Eating regular meals to encourage regular bowel movements
  - Increasing the amount of fibre in your diet if your fibre intake is low
  - Drinking approx 1.5 to 2 litres (3-4pints) of fluid a day
  - Sitting in the correct position on the toilet can help
- Applying heat or cold packs at regular intervals to the painful area may also help to ease your symptoms. Use a hot pack or cold pack covered with a towel. You can use heat for long periods. You should use ice for 20-30 minutes at a time.
- Find positions of comfort (for example, lying on your side with pillows between your knees when breastfeeding).
- Pelvic floor muscle exercises

## Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises

The pelvic floor forms a broad sling of muscle, lying across the bottom of the pelvis, through which pass the openings from the bowel, vagina (birth passage) and the urethra (passage from the bladder).

Left -side view of a woman's bladder and related structures



It is important to start practising exercises with these muscles as they are particularly important during pregnancy, labour and after the birth. They are the main support for your pelvic organs and provide control of the three passages. The weight of your baby on your pelvic floor during pregnancy and delivery will cause these muscles to weaken. This could result in symptoms such as leakage of urine when coughing, urgent or frequent need to pass urine or decreased satisfaction during intercourse. These muscles also provide a great deal of stability and support for your back. You can exercise your pelvic floor muscles in the same way as you would exercise any other muscle.

## Practise the following:

- Imagine that you are trying to stop yourself from passing wind and at the same time imagine trying to stop your flow of urine mid-stream. The feeling is one of 'squeeze and lift', closing and drawing up the front and back passages.
- Hold for as long as you can (up to 10 seconds). Release and rest for a few seconds. Repeat as many times as you can (up to a maximum of 10 repetitions at a time).
- It is important to do pelvic floor exercises without squeezing your legs together, tightening your buttocks or holding your breath. You may feel your lower tummy gently pull in with this exercise.

**Please note: stopping and starting when passing urine is a test but should not be done as an exercise.**

Try the NHS Squeezy APP for women

It is helpful in reminding you to do your pelvic floor exercises.

If your coccyx pain increases with pelvic floor muscle exercises, stop the exercises and contact your physiotherapist.

Please follow the advice given by the Physiotherapist.  
Coccydynia may take several months to improve.

## Website

 [www.nhs.uk/conditions/tailbone-pain-coccydynia/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/tailbone-pain-coccydynia/)

## Further Information

If you have any questions please contact the  
Physiotherapy Department.

Inverclyde Royal Hospital: .....	 01475 504 373
Princess Royal Maternity: .....	 0141 211 5232
Queen Elizabeth University Hospital: .....	 0141 201 2324
Royal Alexandra Hospital: .....	 0141 314 6765
Vale of Leven: .....	 01389 817 53

