

HUMAN PERFORMANCE CENTRE

“Do you have a pain in the butt?”. We Can Help!

Coccydynia, pain of the coccyx, is literally a ‘pain in the butt’. The coccyx is a small v-shaped bone attached to your tailbone (sacrum), that is attached to your low back (lumbar spine).

Sources of coccyx pain can be falling and banging, dislocating or fracturing the coccyx, childbirth, motor vehicle accidents, or pelvic pain, which in return causes shortening of the pelvic floor muscles that attach to the coccyx.

For all sources of coccydynia, sitting with padding from a commercially available doughnut ring or coccyx seat cushion is essential, as sitting is the most painful position. These are available at pharmacies as well as at

office supply stores. A quick makeshift ring can be made at home by rolling up a bath towel lengthwise, twisting it into a horseshoe shape, and placing the open- end of the ring facing the back of a chair so the coccyx is not in contact with the chair or towel when sitting.

In the case of a new fracture or contusion, rest and providing padding when sitting are indicated. For dislocations and muscle imbalances a physiotherapist should be seen. The first-line of treatment is for the physiotherapist to mobilise or loosen the coccyx in a seated position and instruct a patient on how to perform the technique themselves. If this technique is not successful, the tailbone may need to be

manually mobilized from within the rectum. This is a quick technique with good results in a short number of treatments.

In the event that there is a muscle imbalance of the pelvic floor, patients are taught strengthening and relaxation techniques, sometimes utilizing a biofeedback or muscle stimulation unit, where 6-10 treatments are required.

Coccydynia is a painful condition that can limit ones sitting and walking tolerance but can be quickly treated by a physiotherapist



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