

**MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR GP'S  
SOFT TISSUE RHEUMATISM (MUSCULOSKELETAL)**

**Musculoskeletal Conditions**

- Rotator Cuff Disorders
- Adhesive Capsulitis (Frozen Shoulder)
- Epicondylitis (Elbow pain)
- Greater Trochanteric Bursitis (lateral hip pain)
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Plantar Fasciitis

**Clinical Features**

- Trauma, Injury
- Occupation
- Pain and referral pattern
- Pain reoccurs with activity

**Examination Findings**

- Reduced range of motion
- Pain on palpation
- Localised swelling
- Joint crepitus

**Initial GP Diagnostics**

- Ultrasound if concerns for bursitis
- X-rays of the region of concern
- Nerve conduction studies if concerns for nerve entrapment

Musculoskeletal conditions are a clinical diagnosis and investigations should only be performed to exclude sinister pathologies such as fractures etc.

**GP management**

1. Physiotherapy referral
  - a. All musculoskeletal conditions are best managed and treated by a physiotherapist and do not require a medical review.
  - b. All patients should be reviewed by a physiotherapist in the first instance
2. Consider short course of NSAIDs (if no contraindications present)
3. Consider local corticosteroid injection

**Referrals for primary musculoskeletal conditions are no longer accepted as per our new referral guidelines for Liverpool Hospital Rheumatology.**