



EXTRACORPOREAL SHOCK WAVE THERAPY PATIENT INFORMATION

You have been recommended to undertake a course of Extracorporeal Shock Wave Therapy (ESWT) to improve your symptoms. It is important that you read this information carefully before consenting to this treatment.

How does ESWT work?

ESWT is a non-invasive way of restarting the natural healing process. It does this by initiating an acute inflammatory process, much like a fresh injury, from which the body can usually repair itself. The treatment involves sending shockwaves through your skin to influence the affected tissues beneath. The body responds by increasing the blood circulation and metabolism to the affected area breaking down injured tissue. Conditions that are commonly treated include chronic tendon and bone problems.

What is the success rate for ESWT?

Research demonstrates a 77% success rate across a range of conditions. It does not work for everyone, but ESWT does help most people even when other treatments have failed.

What happens during treatment?

You will be positioned on a couch, the area being treated is identified and gel applied. A probe is positioned over the area and high intensity shock waves are pulsed into the tissues. Each treatment takes approximately 5 minutes and can be quite noisy. ESWT can be slightly painful but if the treatment becomes too uncomfortable, adjustments to the pulses can be made to reduce your discomfort.



Example of ESWT being used to treat heel pain

What to expect after your treatment?

ESWT initiates an inflammatory reaction in the tissues. If it sore after treatment you are advised to take non-prescription painkillers such as Paracetamol. However do not take any anti-inflammatory medications such as Ibuprofen or Neurofen as these will interfere with the healing process. Do not use ice on the area.

You may also experience some transient side effects such as skin redness, swelling, haematoma, local red spots (petechiae) and numbness. All of these should resolve in a few days.

How many sessions of ESWT treatment will I need?

Evidence suggests that three to four sessions of treatment 7-14 days apart is most effective. It is important that any side effects have resolved before the next treatment.

How will I pay for this treatment?

If you are insured you are advised to check whether your insurance company will cover the cost of this treatment.

If you do not have insurance please check the cost of this treatment with your Consultants' medical secretary.