



GET BACK TO YOUR BEST

Practical advice for easing aches and pains
caused by lockdown life and preventing
future problems





Introduction

It has been a strange time recently and we all have our own stories to tell.

The pandemic has left an indelible mark on our lives, but at Pure Sports Medicine we're determined to make sure that it doesn't do the same to our bodies. Whether being in lockdown has had a positive impact on your life and has inspired you to get up, get out and be more active, or it has had the opposite effect and impacted your routine of good habits, we're here to help you get back to your best.

We've created this guide to help you begin that journey by looking at the common issues we're seeing as a result of working from home, possibly having more time with less to do and other changes to our daily lives. You will also find some practical advice for how you can ease any aches and pains you may be feeling, as well as how to prevent any future problems.

As always, there is nothing like seeing a professional to assess your situation, but the advice provided here will help you take that first step to understand any pain or discomfort you may be feeling.

To help further, we're also offering a **free 15-minute assessment** so that we can take a look at you, help you understand how the pandemic has affected you, and then provide a path forward with a tailored solution to help you recover and overcome any issues you are experiencing.

We hope you find this guide useful, but for more information or to book an assessment, please click below.

[Book Now](#)

Common Issues

It probably won't surprise you to know that we've seen a wide range of changes to peoples' bodies as a result of the pandemic, but there have been some clear, stand-out common issues.

Generally speaking, people have fallen into one of two camps: they've either become more active and moved more as a result of having more time, or they have become less active and moved less as a result of falling out of their usual routines. This is likely to have been down to a variety of reasons and everyone's situation has been different. But, whether you're in one group or the other, we're here to help.

Have you become more active?

Let's face it, being in lockdown was pretty boring and it's surely something we'd all prefer to avoid in the future, but there were some positives that came out of it. Having more time at home, for our families and for ourselves was a refreshing experience. Many of us were able to get more done, some people felt enriched and possibly calmer without the need to rush around doing the usual things such as travelling to work, taking the kids to school or the general need to be somewhere, and for a good percentage of the population, this meant we could become more active, whether that was doing more of what we love or starting something new.

Without a doubt, walking, running and cycling became more popular as we looked to use this new-found time wisely, stave off the boredom and keep ourselves moving. We've also seen in our patients that many of those who were already active became even more active during the pandemic. On the surface, this all sounds great because you're getting more exercise but this is only the case if your body is ready and able to manage it, whether you're increasing your levels or just starting out. If not, injuries can, and will, occur at some point and not all injuries or conditions instantly present themselves.

Have you become less active?

The bottom line is lockdown has been tough – physically, mentally, and emotionally. It's thrown us off our regular patterns and made it difficult to maintain good habits. We have all experienced ups and downs throughout the whole ordeal and there's no right or wrong to how you have responded. Each experience has been very personal and it's important to be kind to yourself. If that means you've ducked out of a workout here and there, reached for the remote control a little more than usual or that your workload was so intense that it was difficult to find time to get away from the desk, don't be hard on yourself.

With life getting back to a level of normality, we can use this to draw a line under the inactivity and make a fresh start. However, before you do, you need to prepare and ease yourself in gently. Don't assume you'll be able to throw your body back into those 5k runs, spin classes or benching the same weight you used to. If you do, you put yourself at risk of being side-lined again, potentially for even longer, before you've even started.





Common Issues

Whether you're in the more or the less active camp, your body may well have suffered. We've seen a number of issues arise as a result and here's a brief summary to the most common.

Hip pain

With either more or less activity, it's possible that you've experienced some degree of discomfort in your hips at some stage over the pandemic. Many people experience tight hips, no matter how active they are, but lockdown has led to many of us sitting more often which increases our chances of developing tightness in our hips which can lead to numerous issues with the hip joints and also have a domino effect to other areas such as the knees and spine. Similarly, our gluteal muscles are the biggest muscles in our bodies and most of us have just spent the past 18 months sitting on them. Having good strength and flexibility around our hip joints is key, and if you've thrown yourself into exercise, changed your exercise habits or increased what you've been doing, this may be as much of a problem as if you've spent all day sitting.

Back and neck pain

Similar to knees, back and neck are also common areas of pain or discomfort, and we are seeing more patients coming to us with these issues. They usually occur as a result of increased strain or tension due to decreased mobility and variability – consequences of life in lockdown or the strain and tension associated with unaccustomed or increased activity levels. You only need to look at some of your fellow runners in the park to see how much strain they are putting on their necks or their spines. Looking after your back and neck is imperative as your spine and trunk are the solid base from which your limbs move and they also provide support and protection to all your vital internal organs.

Knee pain

It goes without saying, knee pain is a common ailment at any time, but we have seen a noticeable increase since the pandemic began in March 2020. More often than not this is down to increased impact and/or load going through the knee joint. However, a decrease in activity levels can also have an impact as the knee becomes weaker and less capable of absorbing shock and impact. A lot of weight goes through the knees with most daily activities so it's a hugely important part of the body, and therefore crucial that you look after them.

Ankle pain

Maintaining mobility is important for the whole body, but some areas need it more than others and your ankles are a good example. Your ankles may not be the biggest joint in your body, but their strength is deceiving as they are responsible for supporting the weight of the rest of your body. Keeping them active and strong is a necessity, but similar to knees, you'll definitely want to avoid overloading them.

With many people increasing their levels of exercise, in particular through walking and running, we have seen a significant rise in foot and ankle problems. So many people have just pulled out their old trainers and gone for it. Often these trainers lack adequate cushioning and shock absorption and, in some cases, do not provide adequate support leading to increased stress on the ankles and knees and resulting in injury. Our team cannot only advise on the most appropriate footwear for you as an individual, but what exercises you need to do to manage or prevent any ankle pain that has developed as a result of a change in activity.

What To Do

When experiencing pain or discomfort, it's important to keep moving.

It's an all-too-common human reaction to fall into the trap of immediately stopping any form of exercise as soon as we feel any soreness. However, healing is accelerated when we stay active, within the right parameters of course, and keep blood flowing through the aggravated area. Without doing so you are likely to extend your recovery time and experience greater pain or discomfort as the affected area becomes stiff, tight and possibly swollen.

We're not saying you should carry on doing the same things at the same intensity as you were before, far from it. It's just important to keep moving, ensuring that you're getting up out of your seat at regular intervals, stretching as much as you can without feeling pain and going for walks or other forms of light exercise.

Even though it's imperative to stay active, it's crucial that you don't overload the affected area. Movement is good, but this should avoid any more weight than what is necessary, i.e., your own bodyweight. Depending on the severity of your pain or possible injury, support may be required to take load off the affected area, but always remember to keep moving!

You may find that in time your symptoms ease, your pain or discomfort subsides, and your movement becomes more comfortable and less restricted. However, it's important to continue to approach with caution and ease yourself back in. Don't throw yourself back in at the end deep end because if you do you are highly likely to see the problem return, and often with a longer lay-off.





How To Avoid Ongoing Problems

There are ways you can self-manage your recovery and rehabilitation, but never self-diagnose. We would always recommend that you see a consultant and get expert guidance and advice to ensure that you are able to understand the issue and do the right things to recover as quickly and effectively as possible.

Self-diagnosis can be extremely dangerous, often causing more harm than good, which is why we're currently offering a free 15-minute assessment with a member of our specialist team to help identify your problem, offer guidance on how to respond and provide the right solution to get you back to your best. Click the link below to book your [free 15-minute assessment](#).

[Book Now](#)

In the meantime, you can head to our YouTube channel for a whole range of videos providing expert guidance on what you can do to manage any aches and pains. This includes exercises, stretches and workouts to keep you active whilst working from home, along with explanations of certain injuries and conditions to help you understand how yours may have occurred and what you can do to ease it. Click below to visit our YouTube channel.

[YouTube](#)

Locations

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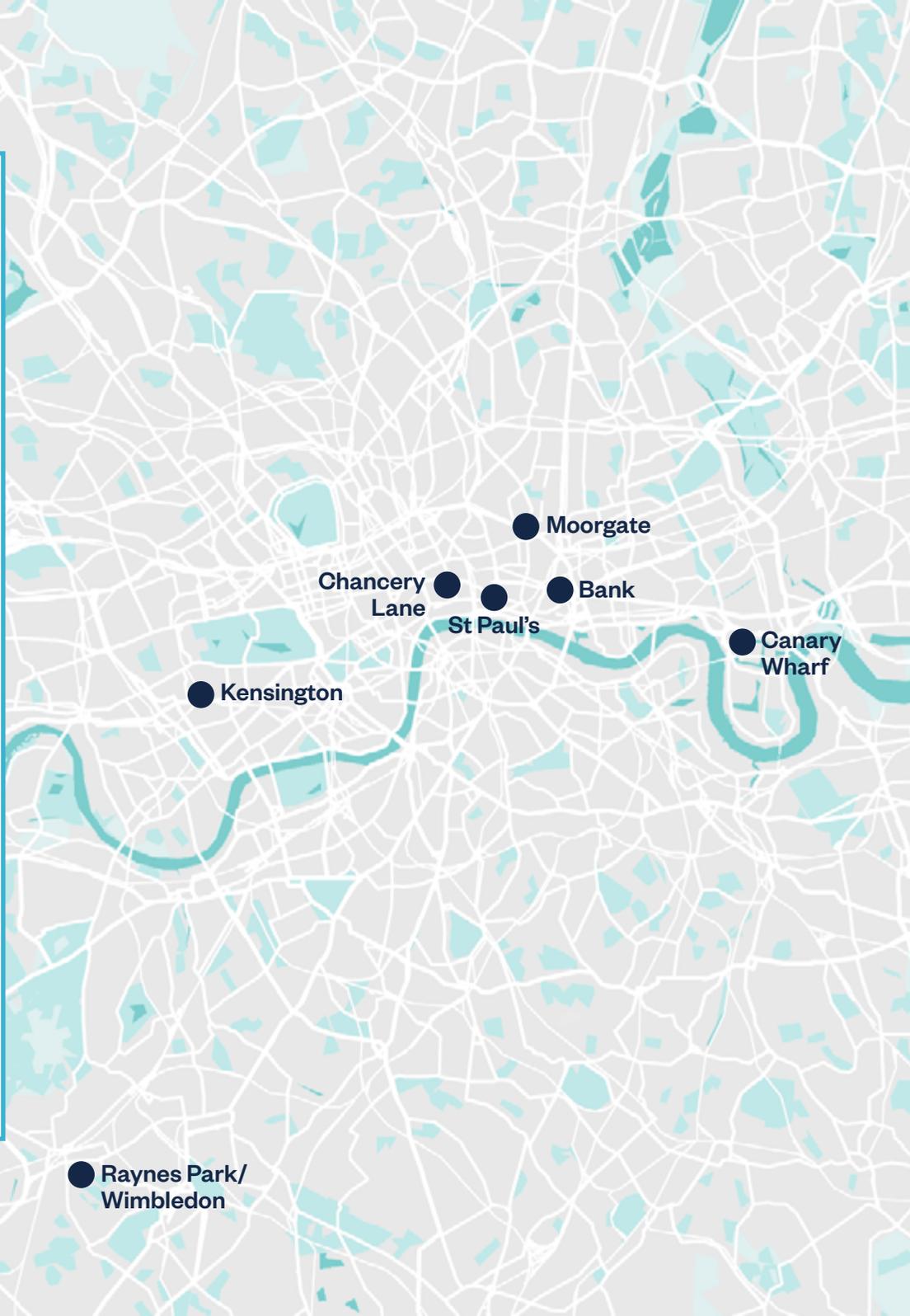
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About Pure Sports Medicine

Pure Sports Medicine provides elite care for everybody through a unique multi-disciplinary approach across a complete range of services - getting you back to your best, with one coordinated team behind you.

Across seven state-of-the-art London clinics, PSM's team of world-class sport and exercise medicine specialists will work with you to prevent, diagnose, treat and manage your injury, ensuring you're at your best, every day.

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