

Flare Up Plan



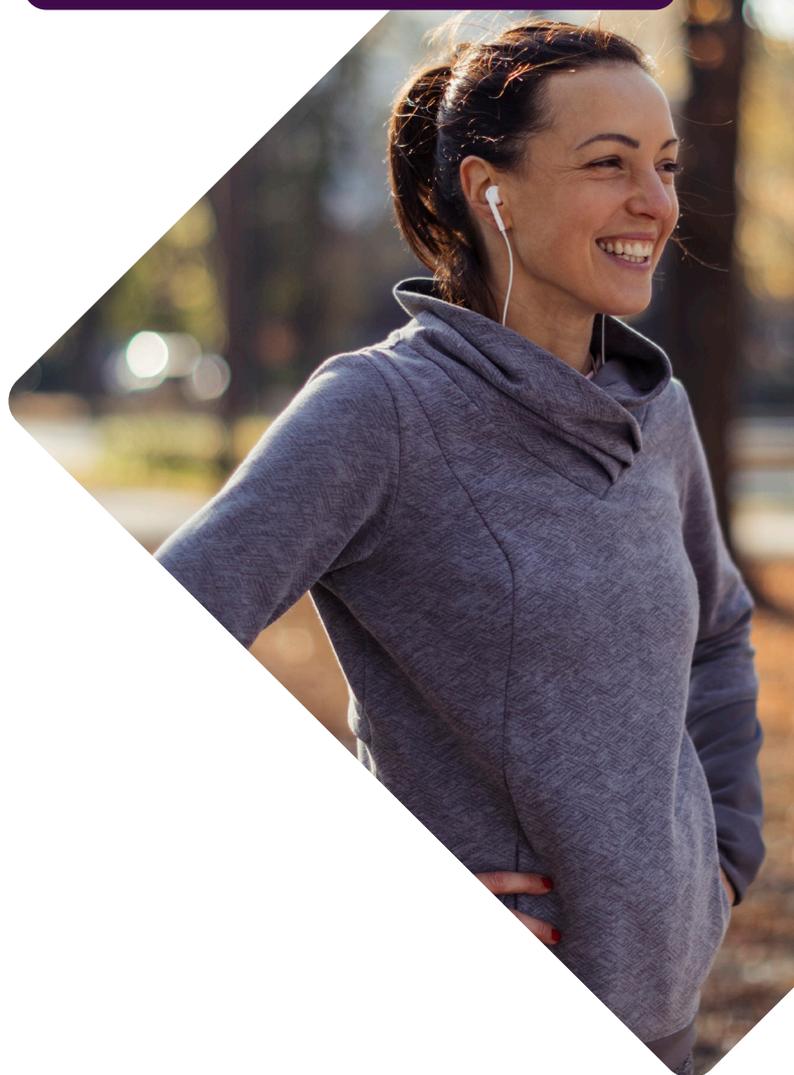
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A flare up is essentially an unexpected increase in your pain. Sometimes, you may not even know what causes it. Sometimes, it can be due to doing too much physical activity too soon. There can be lots of little factors that all combine together to cause it. It may suddenly happen, or you may feel it building over a few days or weeks. Either way, it is an important part of your overall pain management plan to have a flare up plan when you feel this occurs. This plan will be personalised and tailored to you.

While it is important to discuss this with your Physiotherapist or Exercise Physiologist, the "rules" for this plan may be similar:

- ◆ You may need to rest for a short period of time – maybe a day or two
- ◆ Keep exercising, but change your exercise routine to reduce the amount of time or intensity of the exercise
- ◆ Increase relaxation exercises such as yoga
- ◆ Utilise mindfulness strategies
- ◆ Focus on adopting good sleep hygiene to get good sleep quality
- ◆ Do exercise that you enjoy and is meaningful
- ◆ Take time to perform a hobby or a task that you enjoy doing – it might not even be active, it could be knitting or reading a book
- ◆ Use your medication sensibly and as guided by your Doctors
- ◆ Start getting active again, but understand you may have to take a step back to then take a step forward once more
- ◆ Reintroduce exercises in a gradual manner
- ◆ Understand that you are not back to square one, you have just hit a speed bump in the road
- ◆ Talk to others for support and reassurance
- ◆ Congratulate yourself for having worked through the flare up
- ◆ Focus on your plan, and focus on the things you can do to control it – this way, you feel much more confident to manage any other flare ups you have in the future

"Before anything else, preparation is the key to success"
– Alexander Bell



Developing a Flare Up Plan



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What are some potential factors that could cause you to suffer a flare up?

E.g. Stressors (what is in your cup?), illness, physical activity

What are my early warning signs?

E.g. low mood, poor sleep, change in pain, increase in pain, fatigue/tired

What do I need to do to manage my flare ups?

E.g. See GP about medication, adopt pacing strategies for general activities, readjust exercise routine which includes meaningful exercise, meditation, recreational hobbies
