

# Cauda Equina Syndrome

Physiotherapy



It is **common** to experience **leg pain**, **numbness** and/or **weakness** with an episode of **back pain**. Although these symptoms can be distressing for you, they **do not usually require urgent medical attention**. However, there is a **rare** but **serious** back condition called **cauda equina syndrome** that would require **emergency care** from a **specialist spinal team**. See below for some details of warning signs of cauda equina syndrome.

If you have any combination or a number of these warning signs, they could be symptoms of **cauda equina syndrome**:

- **Loss of feeling** or **pins and needles** between your **inner thighs** or **genitals**
- **Numbness** in or around your **back passage** or **buttocks**
- **Altered feeling** when using toilet paper to wipe yourself
- **Changes** when you try to **urinate**
- **Changes** when you **try to stop** or **control** your **flow of urine**
- **Loss of sensation** when you **pass urine**
- **Leaking urine** or recent need to use pads
- **Not knowing** when your **bladder** is either **full** or **empty**
- **Inability** to stop a **bowel movement** or **leaking**
- **Loss of sensation** when you pass a **bowel motion**
- **Change in ability** to achieve an **erection** or **ejaculate**
- **Loss of sensation** in **genitals** during sexual intercourse



Seek **emergency medical help** within 12 to 24 hours!



## Further information



Please visit **watch this video** for when you should seek urgent help for your back pain

If you have any **questions** please contact the **Care Co-ordination Centre** on:

 **0300 131 0111**

 **provide.askus@nhs.net**

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