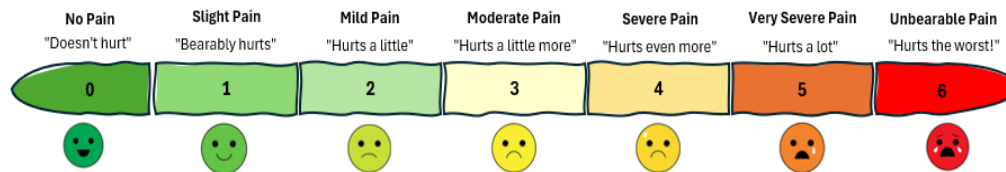


## Introduction

MOHS has adopted a tiered approach to many of their health assessments. This allows us to be responsive to initial problems, whilst ensuring that the severity of a problem is matched by the appropriate level of skilled practitioner.

## The Pain Thermometer



The pain thermometer is a simple graphical tool that can be used to help employees describe pain and discomfort. The scale starts at zero, indicating "No Pain" and extends to six, "Unbearable Pain". It is our primary tool for assessing and re-evaluating joint pain.

## Assessing joint pain

The Pain Thermometer is used, in conjunction with a body mapping tool to assess pain & discomfort. The tool calculates pain scores for individual joints and entire limbs and assigns a colour coding to each. These scores dictate the level, or Tier of intervention required. They are also used to evaluate intervention and, in the form of trigger points, dictate what happens next. This approach ensures a uniformity of service delivery and creates a standard framework to work within. Interventions are limited to 6 sessions before a problem is escalated to the next Tier.

## The Tiers of Assessment

**Tier 1** An initial screening assessment which can be undertaken by any OH Practitioner and is used to identify and Triage an initial problem.

**Tier 2** This is the first level of intervention, which usually takes the form of self-help in the form of simple advice and, in some cases, some basic exercises. It can be undertaken by any OH Practitioner.

**Tier 3** A higher level of intervention undertaken by an Occupational Health Advisor. May include components of both Tier 1 and Tier 2 assessments but may also include a simple review of problematic processes plus temporary adjustments to an employee's role.

**Tier 4** Cases elevated to this level will usually be referred to a third party for specialist review or assessment. Employees might be referred to:

- Their own family doctor (General Practitioner).
- An NHS Physiotherapist (via their own GP).
- Their employer's Health & Safety Officer.
- An independent Physiotherapy provider (with the employer's permission).
- Another specialist, such as an ergonomist who will assess the risks associated with certain process.

Interventions at Tier 2 and Tier 3 will be periodically reviewed, using the assessment tools already described, to evaluate the effectiveness of advice and intervention. If significant improvement has not been obtained by the sixth review or if a problem is deteriorating, then an escalation to a higher Tier (level) is Triggered.

## Trigger Points

Trigger points are used to ensure that employees with Musculoskeletal Problems are assessed at the correct Tier. High individual scores from body mapping or evaluations that do not yield improvements will be escalated to the next Tier of assessment. Stable problems may stay at the same Tier of intervention and improvements may trigger de-escalation to a lower Tier.

## Who should receive a Musculoskeletal Assessment?

- Any employee that presents with a significant Musculoskeletal (MSK) problem.
- Any employee referred for a new or existing MSK problem by their employer.
- Employees undertaking certain, defined processes or roles.

## What should I do if I am struggling with joint pain?

Speak with your own GP and raise the issue with your supervisor, manager or OH Practitioner.

## Where can I find out more?

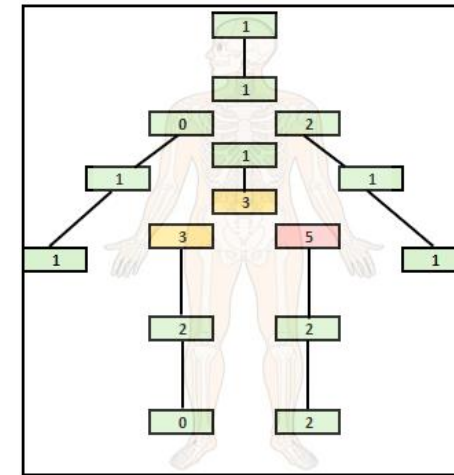
Visit the Resources page of MOHS' website where you can find more information about Health Problems that might be caused by, or impact work. There are several leaflets that relate to Musculoskeletal pain and joint problems:

<https://mohs.co.uk/resources/>

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## The Tiered Approach to Musculoskeletal (MSK) Assessment



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