

### The Outsiders Club

Tel: 020 7354 8291

Internet: [www.outsiders.org.uk](http://www.outsiders.org.uk)

An organisation for disabled and non-disabled. They offer advice about meeting people and sexual relationships.

For more information visit:

[www.sexualhealth.com](http://www.sexualhealth.com) / [www.spinalnet.co.uk](http://www.spinalnet.co.uk)

The Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority

21 Bloomsbury Street

London, WC1B 3HF

Tel: 020 7291 8200

Internet: [www.infea.gov.uk](http://www.infea.gov.uk)

### How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. We ask that you, and anyone visiting you, use the hand sanitiser available at the entrance to every ward before coming in to or after leaving the ward. In some situations hands may need to be washed at the sink using soap and water rather than using the hand sanitiser. Staff will let you know if this is the case.

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[www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk](http://www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk)

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## Sexual Relationships and Fertility Advice Clinic

### A guide for Spinal Cord Injured Patients

If you require a translation or an alternative format of this leaflet please call 01296 315829

## Introduction

Following spinal cord injury (SCI) you may have spent many weeks or months in hospital.

Being apart from your family and partner is not easy and lack of privacy makes it difficult to have a normal relationship.

Your body will have gone through many changes. Part of the rehabilitation process is about regaining control of your body. Once you have achieved this and regained your self-esteem you will probably have questions and have many uncertainties about relationships, fertility and sexuality and what the future holds with regard to these issues.

**Other information relating to Sexual Relationships and Fertility can be obtained from:**

### **Spinal Injuries Association (SIA)**

SIA House  
2 Trueman Place  
Oldbrook, Milton Keynes  
MK6 2HH

Tel: 0845 678 6633  
E-mail: [sia@spinal.co.uk](mailto:sia@spinal.co.uk)  
Internet: [www.spinal.co.uk](http://www.spinal.co.uk)  
Fax: 0845 070 6911  
Advice line: 0800 980 0501

### **Sexual Advice Association**

Tel: 0207 7486 7262  
Email: [info@sexualadviceassociation.co.uk](mailto:info@sexualadviceassociation.co.uk)

### **Psychosexual Therapist**

Michelle Donald PG Dip PST COSRT Accredited  
Tel: 07775 927533  
Email: [michelledonaldpst@btinternet.com](mailto:michelledonaldpst@btinternet.com)  
[michelle.donald@nhs.net](mailto:michelle.donald@nhs.net)

Appointments are available at Stoke Mandeville National Spinal Injuries Centre

*All communications are totally confidential*

Some people only think about getting advice after meeting someone. However, many patients just like to be aware of what is available should the need arise in the future.

**Q Will I ever meet a partner now I'm in a wheelchair?**

**A** *Rehabilitation is about gaining confidence and learning to feel good about yourself. Meeting new people will be easier if you have a positive outlook and a good sense of humour.*



## Spinal Outpatient Services (SPOP)

We hold advice clinics, which can help you.

You can talk to a specialist nurse in a relaxed and private environment.

We are able to answer any questions you may have and offer advice and treatment.

The service is for both male and female patients and is held within the Spinal Outpatient department.

The clinic is for inpatients and outpatients; partners are welcome.

To make an appointment either call our department or you can contact us on:

**Tel: 01296 315829**

**E-mail: [bht.spopnurses@nhs.net](mailto:bht.spopnurses@nhs.net)**

## What service are we able to offer?

Advice about relationships

Sexual function advice plus treatment including:

- oral medication
- injection therapy
- vacuum therapy
- fertility assessments

## Most commonly asked questions:

**Q** *Now I'm in a wheelchair will I be able to have sex again?*

**A** *Sex means different things to different people. Being spinal injured does not mean you cannot have sex again but it may not be the same as it was before your injury. It is important to re-discover your body to find out what feels good for you.*

**Q** *I can't feel, what's the point in sex?*

**A** *Sex is not just about the act of intercourse. Just being intimate with someone can be pleasurable. Kissing, lying next to someone, stroking, caressing, cuddling or being cuddled are pleasurable sensations. You can also gain satisfaction in pleasing your partner. These are things to experiment with and also finding parts of your body where being touched feels good.*

**Q** *Will I be able to have children?*

**A** *Female fertility is unchanged by SCI. Therefore advice about contraception should be sought if you are considering a sexual relationship.*

*Women who are planning to start a family may wish to seek specialist advice about preparing for and keeping healthy throughout pregnancy.*

*Male fertility is usually affected. However, many of our patients have successfully fathered children.*

**For further fertility advice you can talk to your Consultant or make an appointment in our clinic.**

**Q** *Can I get oral medication from SPOP?*

**A** *The nurses are unable to prescribe. We are able to discuss medications and give advice and leaflets about taking oral treatment for erections. For inpatients, your Consultant or ward doctor may prescribe oral therapy after talking to us. Outpatients may be given a prescription by either the outpatient doctor or GP.*

**Q** *Do I have to make an appointment? Sex is the last thing on my mind at the moment.*

**A** *Following a SCI, your body is adjusting to many changes and coping with this takes time. Sex is not a priority for everyone when first injured. Our service is for outpatients as well. You can make an appointment at anytime after your injury.*