

## Patient Information: Coccydynia (tailbone pain)

Coccydynia is the medical term for pain in the tailbone (with "coccyx" referring to the tailbone and "dynia" meaning pain). The coccyx is located at the base of your spine and is made up of three to five fused vertebrae (bones). It plays a key role in stabilizing your body and supporting your weight when you sit.

### The coccyx can become painful or injured due to:

- A fall, such as landing on your bottom from slipping on ice, falling off a horse, or missing a chair while sitting
- Repetitive strain
- Being over-weight or under-weight
- Surgery

### Symptoms of coccyx pain can include:

- Discomfort while sitting or after sitting for a while
- Intense pain when rising from a seated position
- A deep ache in the area around the coccyx (between the buttocks)
- Tenderness when pressure is applied to the tip of the coccyx
- Pain during everyday activities such as bending, driving, working at a desk, or relaxing on the sofa
- Sharp, shooting pains
- A sensation like sitting on a hard object, like a marble
- Discomfort during a bowel movement or when the bowel is full

### Some simple self-care steps you can try at home are:

- Using ice or heat
- Taking anti-inflammatory medications as recommended by your pharmacist or GP
- Adjusting your activities, like avoiding sitting for extended periods and using towels or cushions
- Managing constipation by increasing your fluid and fibre intake, and using laxatives if advised by your pharmacist

If you are concerned, please contact the  
Emergency Department you first attended:

Mercy University  
Hospital  
(021) 4271971

M-UCC  
(St. Mary's  
Health  
Campus)  
(021) 4926900

CUH  
(021) 4920200

Local Injury Unit  
Mallow General  
Hospital  
(022) 58506

Local Injury Unit  
Bantry General  
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(027) 52900



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- Wearing loose clothing.

### Treatment:

Treatment is often delayed as patients may wait for the pain to subside on its own, or healthcare professionals may postpone further referrals, hoping it will resolve independently. As a result, treatment may take longer, and the pain can persist for an extended period.

However, some simple remedies can provide relief. You can try the self-help measures mentioned earlier. Other treatment options include injections of anti-inflammatory medications and steroids, manual therapy, or, in some cases, surgery to remove the coccyx.

### Physiotherapy:

Specially trained physiotherapists can assess and treat coccyx pain after ruling out other potential causes, such as lower back issues. The physio may offer guidance on posture, movement, exercises, and stretches. They might also use manual therapy and taping to address the localized problem.

Manual therapy may involve mobilizing the coccyx externally or, in some cases, internally through the back passage, which typically provides significant relief. Additionally, the physiotherapist can evaluate the muscles and soft tissues around the coccyx and treat them if they are contributing to the pain.

### Sitting:

To ease your pain, it's important to adjust how you sit or avoid sitting altogether when possible. Avoid sitting on "one cheek" as it puts strain on your body.

Leaning forward while sitting reduces pressure on your coccyx. You can also use two rolled-up towels in a V shape, placing your seat bones on them to relieve pressure on your coccyx. Make sure you can slide your hand under your bottom at the back.

Content compiled by [Dr Najam Iqbal](#) , April 2025

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