

Patient information

Costochondritis (rib pain)

What is costochondritis (rib pain)?

Costochondritis is one of the more common causes of breast pain from the chest wall. The tenderness is due to inflammation of one of the underlying joints of the rib cage called costochondral junctions.

The rib cage is made from a mixture of bone and cartilage. At the point where the bone becomes cartilage there are some tiny joints; these joints become inflamed and cause breast pain.

Pain from the chest wall is often made worse when the rib cage is squashed, for example, at night when lying on the affected areas, wearing a seat belt, or when being hugged.

How long will it last?

Costochondritis can last for many months. The cause is largely unknown although coughing and trauma can trigger the condition.

How is it treated?

Treatment is targeted according to symptoms. Some suggestions are:

- Wear a lightweight bra at night
- Deep breathing exercises.
- Take simple pain relief such as paracetamol, aspirin or ibuprofen at night time (with food).

- Avoid unnecessary exercise or activities (whilst suffering discomfort).

If your symptoms deteriorate or you notice new changes you should seek further medical advice from your GP.

If you have any concerns please contact:

Breast Care Nursing Team

Telephone 01284 713281

Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

Donations in support of our work may be made to the West Suffolk Hospital Breast Cancer Fund.

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (formerly DisabledGo)

<https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>



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