

# Rectus Divarication

## Information for Patients



**This leaflet has been written to give you the right information about rectus divarication and what you can do to help with your recovery.**

### What is rectus divarication?

You have two halves to the muscles commonly known as the '6 pack' in your tummy. The medical name for your '6 pack' is rectus abdominus. These muscles are joined together in the middle by something called the linea alba. Rectus divarication (or tummy muscle separation) is when the two halves of the tummy muscles separate.

### What causes rectus divarication?

Rectus divarication can affect both men and women, however it is common to notice symptoms with rectus divarication if you are pregnant or have recently given birth.

### What are the common symptoms?

You may notice a bulge or doming of your tummy muscles when you sit up from lying down or when getting out of the bath.

### What can I do to help myself?

**Understand the problem:** Taking time to read and digest the information above will hopefully help you understand that tummy muscle separation isn't necessarily something that should be feared, that it's safe to be sore and that you can do something about it. Understanding the problem is halfway to dealing with it.

### What can I do to help myself?

**Calm it down:** Often the best place to start with any painful/unpleasant complaint is to try and calm it down. In a lot of cases there will be things your tummy likes to do and some that it is less happy to do. Calming it down simply means looking at the things it doesn't like and trying to make some adjustments or changes to make it easier for yourself. For example, you might find sitting up in bed or lifting objects can be painful or difficult. Rolling onto your side, then sitting up or lifting the object closer to your body (if you can) may be simple ways of making those tasks easier whilst your tummy is unhappy.

**Exercises:** Simple exercises to work some of your other tummy muscles and pelvic floor are thought to be useful at helping with tummy muscle separation. These exercises are very subtle and can be completed 'on the go' once you are happy with them.

You may find sit-ups or plank exercises difficult initially, therefore it is advised that you consider the more simple exercises before progressing onto the more challenging ones.

Search online: [Norfolk and Waveney MSK services](#) 'pelvic floor'

### Will it get better?

Tummy muscle separation improves by itself after childbirth, however in some cases you may need to help this process with some exercises and lifestyle changes.

If you would like to know more about rectus divarication you can explore our dedicated webpage.

Search online for: [Norfolk and Waveney MSK services](#) 'rectus divarication'



If you would like this leaflet in large print, audio, Braille or in a different language, please contact us on **01502 445447**.

Jej šios publikacijos kopija noretumete gauti savo kalba prašome susisiekti su telefono numeriu: **01502 445447**.

Jezeli chcieliby Panstwo otrzymac niniejsza publikacje w tłumaczeniu na jezyk polski, prosimy o kontakt z pod numerem telefonu: **01502 445447**.

Pokud byste chteli kopi této publikace ve Vašem jazyce, prosím kontaktujte ovou na telefonním čísle **01502 445447**.

Bu yayinin kendi dilinizde bir nüshasini isterseniz, lütfen **01502 445447** nolu telefondan ile temasa geçiniz.

Se pretender uma cópia desta publicação no seu idioma, por favor contacte no número **01502 445447**.