

## How to be referred to the Bath AS Course

Patients should be referred for assessment by their local consultant or a GP.

Written referrals should be made to:

Dr Raj Sengupta, Consultant Rheumatologist.  
RNHRD, Upper Borough Walls, Bath, BA1 1RL

Tel: 01225 473442  
Fax: 01225 473437

Further information about the course can be obtained from:

Belinda Jones, Course Administrator.

Email: [belinda.jones@rnhrd.nhs.uk](mailto:belinda.jones@rnhrd.nhs.uk)

Tel: 01225 473455

Or visit our website  
[www.rnhrd.nhs.uk](http://www.rnhrd.nhs.uk)

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you would like this information in a different format.

Your comments, suggestions, praise and complaints will help us to improve the standard of our services. Please contact PALS to feedback your views on the hospital.

Tel: 01225 473424 or email [PALS@rnhrd.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS@rnhrd.nhs.uk)

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

Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases  
NHS Foundation Trust, Upper Borough Walls, Bath, BA1 1RL

**Your Min**

# Rheumatology

## Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases

## The Bath Ankylosing Spondylitis Course

## Patient Information Leaflet

Version number 1

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Amanda Thomas (Senior Physiotherapist and AS Course Manager)

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Royal National Hospital   
for Rheumatic Diseases  
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# Ankylosing Spondylitis

Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS) is a chronic inflammatory spinal condition. Spinal inflammation causes pain and stiffness and, if left untreated, can cause a fixed stooped posture. In some patients, peripheral joints such as hips and shoulders are also involved. The condition can also affect the eyes, lungs and heart.

“There are so many specialists here, there’s such a wealth of help and information. There’s no way that you could leave the course without having been more informed or better off than you came in.”

Carl Hodge, AS Patient

While it is impossible to predict how the condition will progress, the majority of patients with AS can lead full active lives. Appropriate diagnosis and early intervention from a specialist multidisciplinary team is crucial to reduce the long-term effects of this condition. Self-management is a key aspect of care, and it is recognised that active engagement in self-management of AS has a positive influence on its outcome.

Drug treatment has undergone significant changes with the advent of the anti-TNF agents, and these have been shown to be remarkably effective for AS patients.

## What we offer

We have a long tradition of providing excellent clinical care for AS patients locally and nationally. We aim to help with all aspects of AS, from early diagnosis to treatment and the optimisation of drug treatments.

At the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (RNHRD) we offer a dedicated AS course, led by a Consultant Rheumatologist and specialist physiotherapy team.

## Who is the Bath AS Course for?

Our course aims to promote self-management and provide patients with the resources to optimise their health. It is designed for:

- people with a new diagnosis of spondyloarthritis
- those experiencing a flare-up of their disease
- people post surgery, e.g., hip replacement
- people on anti-TNF treatment

The Bath AS Course is provided at three different levels of intensity to cater for different levels of functional ability. Those for whom group management is not suitable, the option of hospital admission for individual treatment is available.

## About the Course

The Bath AS Course is two weeks long. It is led by the physiotherapy team, who supervise daily exercise and hydrotherapy sessions and provide a number of the education sessions. Other members of the multidisciplinary team provide specialist education sessions to the group. Each patient is reviewed by the Consultant Rheumatologist on a weekly, multidisciplinary ward round. Progress on the course is discussed with the patient and any issues around medications, investigations and complications of disease are dealt with.

Patients are accommodated close to the hospital in the city centre, and will have their own rooms. There is no parking at the hospital, but it is situated close to rail and motorway networks, and only a short walk away from a number of public car parks and park-and-ride facilities. There are also a number of bus routes that pass close by the hospital.

## The Team

The Bath AS Course is provided by a multidisciplinary team which includes a consultant rheumatologist, physiotherapists, occupational therapist, counsellor, pharmacist, podiatrist, dietician and AS administrator.