

# 1. Initial Assessment

Assess [red flag symptoms](#) and refer where necessary.

Conduct initial assessment to briefly review medical (severity, duration and type of pain), psychological and social risk factors.

Use the [STarT Back](#) tool to assess medical and psychological risk.

Where patients are at medium or high risk, conduct a [more detailed assessment](#), where possible in the same consultation. Where necessary, this will be at a follow-up appointment.

Areas of social risk: Low expectation of return to work, lack of confidence in performing work activities, heavier work, poor work relationships, social dysfunction, medico-legal issues.

Whilst waiting for further assessment, [first stage interventions](#) can be used.