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## **British abuse claims denied**

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THE Pentagon has rebutted claims of abuse made by the Britons released from Guantanamo Bay last week.

Officials in Washington continued to insist yesterday that the four men had trained at terror camps in Afghanistan. They also claimed that it was “standard operating procedure” for Al-Qaeda suspects to make false claims of torture and ill-treatment following capture.

The US authorities believe that the four pose “a significant threat” even though they were released without charge last Wednesday after questioning by anti-terrorist police officers.

This weekend the men, who have endured as much as three years in captivity, were with their families at safe houses.

All four — Moazzam Begg, 36, from Birmingham; Feroz Abbasi, 25, from Croydon, south London; Richard Belmar, 25; and Martin Mubanga, 32, both from north London — are considering suing the American government on the grounds of torture and unlawful detention.

Documents obtained by The Sunday Times from American courts show that Abbasi believes that he was administered injections — under the guise of “immunisation” — that were intended to “unhinge the detainee’s mental and emotional stability and calm”.

In a statement presented to a US military tribunal at Guantanamo before his release, Abbasi said the injections “partially sent me crazy” to the point that he “broke down and began talking to interrogators”.

He also claims that the injections damaged his testicles, while on other occasions he believes that he was sexually abused during body searches.

Lawyers for Begg claim that he was tricked into thinking his wife was being tortured.

Lieutenant-Commander Flex Plexico, a Pentagon spokesman, denied any wrongdoing at Camp Delta. “These detainees are making allegations of abuse after having told US, UK and other representatives that they were not abused. It seems to fit the standard operating procedure in Al-Qaeda training manuals,” he said.

Lawyers of the Guantanamo Britons denied that their clients were making false claims. They said that the Red Cross and FBI had also questioned the Camp Delta regime.