

Coronavirus advice for patients coming to hospital and clinics

Help Us Help You Stay Safe in Hospital during COVID-19

This leaflet is intended for patients who have been invited to attend Derriford Hospital or one of our other sites. We would urge you to read this leaflet carefully so you can help us help you to stay as safe as possible. You will be asked to take steps to reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19 for your safety and the safety of our staff and other patients.

What to expect

We have taken a number of steps to reduce the risk of COVID-19 being transmitted in our hospital and clinic settings. These include:

- Observing the highest standards of infection prevention and control including our staff wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Isolating patients who test positive for COVID-19 or who are suspected of having the virus
- Encouraging patients and staff to practice 2m physical distancing from others, wherever possible
- Changing our normal visiting arrangements so we reduce the amount of people coming in

Do not attend with symptoms of COVID-19

Please only attend planned appointments if you have no symptoms of COVID-19. If you are worried you may have symptoms, please call NHS 111 for advice. You can find out more about coronavirus at www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

Please do attend if you are invited for an appointment

Where appropriate, we will arrange remote appointments so that you can speak to your clinician from the comfort of your own home and don't have to travel to the hospital. However, if you have been asked to come in for a face-to-face appointment, we need to see you, so please do attend.

- Please **attend alone** if you can, unless a carer is required or in exceptional circumstances, for example, you are expecting to receive bad news. This will help us reduce the number of people coming into the hospital. If you have any questions, please call the number on your appointment letter to discuss this
- Please **wear a surgical mask** as a face covering (not any other face covering) for the full duration of your visit. These masks are provided at our main entrances. Please bring a plastic bag with you to put your face covering into, should you need to take it off as part of your examination or treatment.
- Please try to **arrive as close to your appointment time** as you can
- Please **undertake a Lateral Flow Test** prior to attending for your appointment and bring proof of your negative test result with you, either in a clear plastic bag or by photographing it and bringing the photograph with you on a mobile device. This will be checked by staff on your arrival. If you test positive, please ring us to let us know, so we can rearrange your appointment. Thank you for doing this. It helps us protect our most vulnerable patients. For more information on how to Get Tested, please visit Plymouth City Council's website: www.plymouth.gov.uk/coronaviruscovid19information/gettested

Coming in for a planned admission (including day surgery)

If you are being admitted to hospital, we need you to take extra precautions to minimise the risk presented by COVID-19. If COVID-19 infection occurs when you have surgery or whilst in hospital, this could make your recovery more difficult, or increase your risk of serious illness, or death.

Before your operation or procedure

In line with the latest NICE guidance, all patients undergoing a planned operation or procedure requiring anaesthetic or sedation, are asked to:

- Follow comprehensive social-distancing and hand-hygiene measures for 14 days before admission (see [government advice on social distancing on the nhs.uk website](#))
- Have a test for SARS-CoV-2 from 3 days before admission. We will contact you with details of how to do this. Your operation would be likely to be postponed if you test positive or are unwell.
- Self-isolate from the day of the test until admission

Being at greater risk

- If you are at greater risk of getting COVID-19, or having a poorer outcome if you get it, you may want to self-isolate before a planned procedure and the length of self-isolation should be 14 days. To find out if you are at greater risk, visit the NHS website: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/

Your operation or procedure

- Your anaesthetic assessment will likely be by phone with a nurse and possibly an anaesthetist too
- Your operation may not take place on the site that you were expecting. We will be operating at Derriford Hospital, the Peninsula Treatment Centre and Plymouth Nuffield
- Circumstances may be different to what you have previously been used to in hospital. Wards may be reorganised, it may seem quieter and staff will be wearing PPE
- You may not meet your surgeons until the day of treatment, and they might not be the ones you expected. They will however be experienced and trained to perform your operation
- We have restricted visiting to protect our vulnerable patients which means you can have one person named as your visitor to visit you for one hour every day throughout your stay. If you start to show symptoms of coronavirus or test positive while admitted to Derriford Hospital, you will be immediately isolated to ensure the safety of other patients and staff
- It is possible that coming to hospital might increase your chances of contracting COVID-19 virus. If COVID-19 infection occurs when you have surgery or whilst in hospital, this could make your recovery more difficult, or increase your risk of serious illness, or death

After your operation

- You should continue to practice social distancing for a further 14 days – after an anaesthetic/operation you will potentially be more vulnerable and at risk of infection
- You will be discharged from hospital when you are ready, or may be moved elsewhere to a 'step-down' unit to complete your recovery. Some follow-up may be conducted by telephone

Discharge to a care home or hospice

If you are going to a care home or hospice after being in hospital, you will be tested for COVID-19 before you leave.

Visiting

In order to protect our most vulnerable patients, we have restricted visiting to the Rule of 1. If you are an inpatient this us., this means:

- One allocated and named visitor for each patient for one hour per day maximum. Unless special circumstances prevail, this is one person per each patient's stay and not a different person/family member each day
- Please undertake a Lateral Flow Test prior to visiting and bring proof of your negative test result with you, either in a clear plastic bag or by photographing it and bringing the photograph with you on a mobile device
- Absolute and strict compliance with adherence to wearing a hospital-provided surgical mask (not any other face covering) for the full duration of your visit
- Strict hand hygiene and compliance with any other infection prevention and control measures necessary

Thank you for your support
For the latest advice and information
please visit: www.plymouthhospitals.nhs.uk

