

Having a hospital procedure during COVID-19



i Important information
for all patients having a
procedure during
COVID-19

About this booklet

This leaflet provides information for patients who have a planned procedure scheduled at NHS Golden Jubilee. In these challenging times you may be concerned about the risks of Coronavirus/ COVID-19 infection and this leaflet explains how we are working to reduce these risks and progress your treatment.

What is Coronavirus/COVID-19?

Coronavirus is the virus that causes the illness COVID-19. Patients who have COVID-19 at the time of surgery or shortly after are more likely to become unwell. They are more likely to be admitted to intensive care and also have a higher risk of death after surgery.

What can I do to prepare for my procedure and protect myself?

Evidence shows that fitter patients recover quicker from surgery and experience fewer complications. What we understand about the virus also shows that those people in better health usually develop milder symptoms and recover quicker from COVID-19.

It is always important to try and ensure you are in the best possible condition ahead of your procedure. This includes stopping smoking and ensuring a balanced diet with regular exercise where possible. If you have diabetes, high blood pressure and/or anaemia (low blood count), it is important to try and get these as well controlled as possible before your operation.

You may want to discuss your medical conditions with your General Practitioner (GP) to make sure that you're on the right medications.

In line with national guidance we will ask all patients coming in to hospital to limit social contact and follow strict physical distancing and hand hygiene requirements for 14 days before surgery.

You will be required to isolate for the three-day period immediately prior to your admission (included within your 14 days). Within this three-day period, you will be tested for COVID-19. This is a simple nose and throat swab; if it is negative, your planned surgery will be able to proceed. If the swab is positive, your operation will be delayed for around two weeks – although inconvenient this is much safer than going ahead straight away.

You must continue to isolate until you are admitted to the hospital for surgery even if you have had a negative result. We may ask you to continue to isolate while you recover from surgery; this will be discussed with you.

Please note any patients coming into hospital for an Oesophagectomy or Gastrectomy must self-isolate for the full 14 days prior to admission.

Three day self-isolation period

When you are **self-isolating prior to your admission** you **must** follow these face-to-face distancing measures:

- Strictly avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (new continuous cough, fever or loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste (anosmia)).
- Don't leave your house.
- Don't attend any gatherings - this includes gatherings of friends and families in private spaces for example family homes, weddings and religious services.
- Don't go out for shopping, leisure or travel and, when arranging food or medication deliveries, these should be left at the door to minimise contact.
- Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media.
- Use phone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services – if you require an ambulance, phone 999 and tell the call handler you are following shielding measures because of an underlying health condition.

COVID vaccinations should not take place within 72 hours of admission to support patients in their pre surgery self-isolation.

What should I do if I have someone else living with me?

The rest of your household aren't required to self-isolate however, they should support you by following the guidance on physical distancing. Minimise the time other family members spend in shared spaces (such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas) as much as possible and keep shared spaces well ventilated.

You should:

- aim to keep two metres away from people you live with and encourage them to sleep in a different bed where possible;
- use a separate bathroom from the rest of the household, if you can – if you do share a toilet and bathroom with others, it's important that they are cleaned after use every time (for example, wiping surfaces you have come into contact with);
- consider drawing up a rota for bathing, with you using the facilities first;
- make sure you use separate towels from the other people in your house, both for drying yourself after bathing and for hand hygiene purposes;
- avoid using the kitchen while they are present;
- take your meals back to your room to eat, if you can;
- use a dishwasher (if you have one) to clean and dry the family's used crockery and cutlery – if you don't have a dishwasher, wash them using your usual washing up liquid and warm water; and
- use a separate tea towel for drying crockery and cutlery.

It will be difficult for some people to separate themselves from others at home. You should do your best to follow this guidance and everyone in your household should:

- regularly wash their hands
- avoid touching their face
- clean frequently touched surfaces

What if I can't physically distance and/or self-isolate?

Self-certification for up to three days can cover leave from work for the self-isolation period. A sick note from your GP can support a longer absence up to the 14 days if required to physically distance.

We appreciate some people may have personal circumstances (for example young children, carer responsibilities) that may impact their ability to physically distance and self-isolate; if so please contact us and this can be discussed with the clinical team.

Getting to hospital for your appointment

Please consider how you travel to the Golden Jubilee National Hospital for inpatient or day case treatment, an outpatient appointment or COVID testing. You must maintain the principles of self-isolation when you are travelling to the hospital. Where possible **you should only travel with a member of your own, or extended household (bubble)**.

When travelling to hospital with a member of your own household, **or extended household (bubble)**; you must ensure no-one in the vehicle has symptoms of COVID or is COVID positive and that you:

- keep your distance and take care entering and exiting the vehicle
- sit as far apart as possible in the vehicle, avoiding face-to-face
- maintain good ventilation by keeping the car windows open
- wear a face-covering, unless you are exempt
- clean your hands before and after your journey

If this is not possible pre-arranged hospital transport or private transport (for example a taxi or private hire car) can be considered.

If you must use public transport, it is important that you follow the instructions set out in the UK Government's Safer Travel Guide for Passengers. Patients who need assistance to travel to the Golden Jubilee National Hospital should contact our Patient Coordination Centre on 0141 951 5266 for help arranging this.

Accessing and moving around the hospital

We have changed how patients and staff move across our hospital site to support physical distancing and would ask that you follow this while on site. All people on site are encouraged to "Keep Left, Keep Moving, Keep Safe" and ensure you wear a face covering.

Unfortunately, during this time we have restricted visiting and will be asking patients to arrive for appointments alone; anyone accompanying you will not be able to come into the hospital as we try to limit the flow of people on the site. If you require assistance for your visit, please contact the Patient Coordination Centre on 0141 951 5266 to discuss. You can find details of visiting arrangements for inpatients on our website or discuss with your clinical team.

Please note if you are attending the site for a COVID test prior to your admission via the drive through facility you must not enter the main hospital site while you are awaiting your results. Toilet facilities adjacent to Hospital Reception can be used if required, but no further access to the hospital is allowed at this time.

You should only come into the hospital for your appointment and/ or admission and unless you require assistance your relative will not be able to accompany you. We would also ask that you maintain your self-isolation and not mix with others awaiting drive through testing.

Will this stop me from getting Coronavirus/COVID-19

There is still a small chance you could acquire Coronavirus/COVID-19 around the time of your operation and that this infection could be serious. We think, however, the measures we have advised you to take before your surgery are the best way of reducing the risk. We will also do everything we can when you come into hospital to keep the risk as low as possible.

Next steps

If you have any specific concerns or questions you wish to discuss you can call our Patient Co-ordination Centre 0141 951 5266.

Our Patient Co-ordination Centre will contact you 48 hours before your planned admission. They will:

- carry out a routine screening questionnaire on the telephone;
- check that your condition has not changed;
- ask some screening questions to establish if you have any signs of COVID-19; and
- they will also ask you to confirm that you have been self-isolating.

When your consent for your procedure is discussed with you, you will be asked to confirm you have read and understood this information and that you have undertaken the required precautions and isolation.

You can also read more information online on our website hospital.nhsgoldenjubilee.co.uk and click the link **Coronavirus (COVID19) information for patients and visitors**.

All of our publications are available in different languages, larger print, braille (English only), audio tape or another format of your choice.

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Tha gach sgrìobhainn againn rim faotainn ann an diofar chànanan, clò nas motha, Braille (Beurla a-mhàin), teip claidinn no riochd eile a tha sibh airson a thaghadh.

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: 0141 951 5513

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