

Introduction

This document is for people who have been seen and assessed by the ENT team in Hereford as needing thyroid surgery. You will have already been seen by a doctor and your name added to the waiting list, most likely at the Worcester Royal Hospital.

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides information on what to do should your condition deteriorate, while waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance has been written by clinicians who are responsible for your care.

Guidance for Patients

Patients waiting for **diagnostic thyroid surgery**, for example an indeterminate thyroid nodule, should have their surgery relatively quickly (within 6 – 8 weeks) and are therefore less likely to need to refer to this guidance document. If you do experience any symptoms of progressive growth of the thyroid or nodule, however, e.g. pain, swallowing difficulties or a hoarse voice, then you should contact the ENT department at the county hospital immediately.

For patients waiting for thyroid surgery for **compressive symptoms**, please contact the ENT department at the county hospital immediately, should you experience any symptoms of progressive growth of the thyroid or nodule e.g. pain, swallowing difficulties or a hoarse voice.

For patients waiting for surgery for **hyperthyroidism/Grave's Disease**, then any symptoms that may represent a fluctuation in your thyroxine level (particularly an increase e.g. palpitations, sweats, weight loss, tremor) will mean we need to recheck your thyroid function tests to ensure they are at the correct level for your surgery. Please contact your GP or the Endocrine or ENT department at the county hospital should you experience any of these symptoms, for the test to be completed.

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it's not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit www.nhs.uk. The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening – severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.

The contents of this information has been reviewed and approved by the Deputy Medical Director for Wye Valley NHS Trust on 14th April 2022

GP surgeries are still open

If you experience an increase in pain, inability to weight bear on this limb or a significant reduction in mobility, you should in the first instance contact your General Practitioner for review and advice.

GP surgeries are still open and are working differently to how they did before the COVID-19 pandemic. GP practices continue to make best use of telephone, online and video consultations. Face-to-face appointments are still being given to those who need it.

When you phone or use an online form to contact your GP surgery to make an appointment, you will be asked some questions which are designed to help staff guide you to the most appropriate clinical person to help you with your condition. This could be a nurse, clinical pharmacist, physician's associate, GP or paramedic.

Contact Us

If you would like to contact us regarding your thyroid surgery please call the ENT department on 01432 364075 or the Head & Neck Cancer Nurses: 01432 355444 ext. 5870