

General Surgery – Removal of Gall Bladder

Introduction

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 you with information on how you can support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance has been written by clinicians who are responsible for your care.

Guidance for Patients

Whilst you are waiting for your procedure you should try to avoid eating fat. To help you cut the total amount of fat in your diet you can:

- compare food labels when you shop so you can choose foods that are lower in fat
- choose lower-fat or reduced-fat dairy products or dairy alternatives
- grill, bake, poach or steam food rather than frying or roasting
- measure oil with a teaspoon to control the amount you use, or use an oil spray
- trim visible fat and take the skin off meat and poultry before cooking it
- choose leaner cuts of meat that are lower in fat, such as turkey breast and reduced-fat mince
- make your meat stews and curries go further by adding vegetables and beans
- try reduced-fat spreads, such as spreads based on olive or sunflower oils

It is important that while you are waiting for your surgery you remain as active and as medically fit as possible. If you have any long-standing conditions such as high blood pressure you should get this reviewed at your doctor's surgery to make sure it remains well controlled. This will also help prevent any unnecessary delays when you come for your pre-operative assessment. Maintaining a well-balanced diet is also important, as is reducing any excessive weight that may be impacting on your general health.

Healthy eating and being active

Information and advice on healthy eating and becoming more active is available from:

- [One You Eat Better](#) (website) - includes Easy Meals app for healthy meals and the Change4Life Food Scanner to help reduce levels of sugar in your diet
- [Better Health - Get Active](#) (website) - includes tips on getting active for all, including the downloadable Active 10 app, as well as tailored advice for those living with a long-term condition

Try to maintain a healthy weight. You have a higher risk of developing complications if you are overweight.

Regular exercise should help you prepare you for the operation, help you recover and improve your long-term health. Before you start exercising, ask the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

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The [NHS Better Health](#) (website) provides online support to help you lose weight and includes access to the NHS 12 week weight loss plan.

The NHS 12 week fitness plan will support your weight loss plan as well as improve your health. This is aimed at beginners and will help get you into the habit of regular exercise over the course of the programme. It is structured but flexible enough to allow you to fit the exercise sessions around your other weekly commitments.

If you are a current smoker, it would be advisable to seek support to help with stopping, advice can be found at your local pharmacy or Doctor's surgery.

Make sure you follow any advice, given by your healthcare team, regarding any medication you take.

You can reduce your risk of infection in a surgical wound.

- In the week before the operation, do not shave or wax the area where a cut is likely to be made.
- Try to have a bath or shower either the day before or on the day of the operation.
- Keep warm around the time of the operation. Let the healthcare team know if you feel cold.

If you are diabetic, keep your blood sugar levels under control around the time of your procedure.

If you have not had the coronavirus (Covid – 19) vaccine, you may be at increased risk of serious illness related to Covid-19 while you recover. Speak to your doctor or healthcare team if you would like to have the vaccine.

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

If your condition suddenly worsens whilst you are waiting you should seek advice.

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.

GP surgeries are still open

GP practice staff are also helping patients to manage their conditions at home while they wait for hospital appointments.

GP surgeries are still open and are working differently to how they did before the COVID-19 pandemic and 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

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help you with your condition. This could be a nurse, clinical pharmacist, physician's associate, GP or paramedic.

Contact Us

If you need to contact us regarding your condition, please telephone your consultant's medical secretary.