

## Cardiology & Cardiothoracic Surgery - Angioplasty

### 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.

### Guidance for Patients

The coronary arteries are around the outside of the heart muscle supplying it with blood and oxygen. In some people these arteries become narrowed and the flow of blood to the heart muscle is reduced. At times when the heart is working harder, for example during exercise, the reduced blood supply to areas of the heart can cause pain in the chest. This pain is known as angina.

Angioplasty uses a balloon to open a narrowed artery and improve the blood supply to the heart muscle. It is usually done prior to stent insertion but sometimes performed on its own.

If you are an outpatient (coming in for the test as a day case) we will invite you to attend a pre-assessment appointment. You will be asked to have some blood tests prior to this appointment. We will send the form to you with the letter confirming your appointment.

The appointment will be with a Cardiac Nurse Specialist who will describe the test, discuss the risks involved and give guidance on preparing for the test, including any required changes to your medication, if you need to stop eating and what to bring. Attendance at this clinic is very important for preparing you for the test; the appointment lasts approximately half an hour.

If you take warfarin or Direct Oral Anti-Coagulants such as apixaban, rivaroxaban, dabigatran or edoxaban you will be given advice for managing your medication before, during and after the test at your pre-assessment with the Cardiac Nurse Specialist.

If you are diabetic and are taking Metformin/Avandamet tablets you should stop taking the tablets the day before your test. Do not stop taking other diabetic tablets. Full individual instructions will be given by the nurse in your pre-assessment appointment

### 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](http://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.

## My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

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

### Contact Us

In some areas, we are experiencing a significant backlog following our response to the Covid-19 pandemic. We are doing everything we can to reduce this backlog including putting on extra clinics and theatre lists and opening additional sites to offer these services. We have also increased the ways we can offer appointments including offering more video and telephone appointments (as well as face to face appointments where appropriate).

Please can we request that you **do not contact your GP practice about waiting times**, as they do not have access to this information.

If you have any concerns or questions please use the contact details on your hospital letter, or if you do not have a letter with these contact details please contact our [Patient Advice & Liaison teams](#).

### Keep Moving

Reducing your weight and getting active are two of the most powerful things you can do for your body and for your mind. Extra weight places additional strain on your lungs and heart, making it harder for the body to cope with surgery and respond to diseases, including COVID-19

Eating a healthy diet will help you get fit and recover quicker after surgery. Being a healthy weight also reduces your risk of blood clots and wound infections afterwards.

[Visit our weight management page for details of local support available.](#)

### Improve Your Health

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone which has caused a lot of people to think more seriously about their health. If you have decided this is the right time for you to make changes check out

[www.nhs.uk/live-well](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well) and [www.nhs.uk/oneyou/](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/)

They can also provide some inspiration for you and your family. The Trust has access to many resources which may help you in making healthier choices, these can be accessed [here](#).

### Good Mental Health

Mental health issues will affect 1 in 4 people at some point in their life. Although FHFT does not itself provide urgent mental health specialist services, we are keen that you can access help and support when you need it. Please visit [FHFT website](#) where you can access links to Mental Health support in the local area.

### Ongoing health conditions

About 15 million people in England have an ongoing health condition.

Long-term conditions or chronic diseases are conditions for which there is currently no cure, and which are managed with drugs and other treatment, for example: diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, arthritis and hypertension (high blood pressure).

## My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

If you are living with one of these ongoing health conditions, there are many ways in which you can [look after yourself](#).