

## **My Planned Care Patient Information Platform**

### **Gastroenterology - Endoscopy of Digestive Tract (Gastroscopy)**

#### **Introduction**

The COVID-19 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. When you are waiting for further treatment, it can sometimes feel like a long wait.

The information and advice here is aimed at helping you manage that wait so you arrive for your appointment in the best possible physical and mental health. The NHS has limited resources which means that we are unable to treat you as quickly as we would like. Each healthcare provider has to consider the type of help you need, how quickly you need treatment, the best course of action to help you and when and where you can be seen. The process of sorting patients based on their individual needs is called prioritisation. The system of prioritisation is applied consistently across the NHS to help us to decide the order in which patients receive their treatment. This is essential to ensure that we provide care based on need. The system means that care is delivered in the fairest way possible.

Once a referral has been made from primary care to secondary care, the specialist team conduct assessments and then agree with you on the right course of action. At this stage, the urgency will be assessed. If you have a long-term health condition, for example, you may need treatment faster than someone without.

#### **Guidance for Patients**

Your consultant has recommended a gastroscopy. This is a procedure to look at the inside of your digestive tract using a thin flexible camera (endoscope). You will be provided with a patient information leaflet and instructions that detail the procedure.

It should take 15 to 45 minutes to have your gastroscopy. You might be at the hospital for around 4 hours from the time you get there until you go home.

You can discuss the procedure with your doctor or the nurse practitioner, but if you decide to have an intravenous light sedative to help you relax you will require an adult to collect you and stay overnight with you following the procedure. You will not be able to drive for 24 hours.

If you have not received this information please contact the endoscopy admissions team on 0300 422 6350/6351

We provide these services at both Gloucester Royal Hospital (GRH) and Cheltenham General Hospital (CGH) sites. Information specific to these units can be accessed by using the link [www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/our-wards/endoscopy-unit/](http://www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/our-wards/endoscopy-unit/)

A gastroscopy can be done to check what's causing your digestive symptoms, such as:

- difficulties swallowing or pain when swallowing (dysphagia)
- indigestion, heartburn or stomach pain that does not go away or keeps coming, even if you take medicine
- you keep feeling sick (nausea) or being sick (vomiting), or both
- vomiting blood
- your poo is black and sticky, like tar (there may be blood in it from your stomach)
- to check for Cancer

You will need to bring a list of medications to your appointment, along with a dressing gown, slippers and bag for your belongings.

You'll speak with a nurse about what's going to happen. They'll ask some questions about your health and medical history

You may be offered something to make you more comfortable and make the test easier, such as:

- local anaesthetic spray – to numb the back of your mouth and inside of your throat
- sedation – medicine given through a small tube in your arm to help you relax

Please contact the Endoscopy patient helpline if you have diabetes or are taking any blood thinning medications.

Further information can be found at the following weblink: [Endoscopy \(gloshospitals.nhs.uk\)](https://gloshospitals.nhs.uk/endoscopy)

Contact number: 0300 422 6350. Please leave a message if the phone is not answered and you will receive a return call within 24 hours. This service is available Monday - Friday 08.00-17.00

## **What should I do if my health is deteriorating?**

If your symptoms are worsening you can contact your GP or use our endoscopy helpline for advice on 0300 422 6350

There are also resources available at NHS.UK for specific conditions and the following websites which offer useful advice on how to manage symptoms whilst you are waiting for your procedure <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/gastroscopy/>

The Stop Smoking Service provides a range of options to help you quit including support from an advisor, stop smoking medications, e-cigarettes and a digital offer for those who wish to quit by themselves. If you are not ready to quit just yet but would like more information on how to protect your family, Smoke free Homes, advises on how to make your home and car smoke free.

The Weight Management Service supports adults aged 18 years or over who want to lose weight and have been identified as obese.

Why not download the BEST YOU App on your smart phone,



Create goals and track your progress PLUS regularly updated free tips, top advice, easy recipes and much more.

Whether you intend to:

- Increase your activity levels
  - Stop smoking
  - Reach /maintain a healthy weight
  - Reduce the amount of alcohol you drink
- ...using Best-You is proven to help you achieve your goals.

### **Urgent Health Advice**

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it is 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.

### **Contact Us**

Please contact the endoscopy helpline on 0300 422 6350 and we will return your call within 24 hours.