

# My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

## Rheumatology – Waiting well

### Introduction

**Rheumatology** deals with the investigation, diagnosis and management of people living with inflammatory rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases, acquired connective tissue diseases and bone diseases including Osteoporosis. Degenerative joint diseases such as osteoarthritis are not normally dealt with in rheumatology but may benefit from interventions such as physiotherapy. If you are on the waiting list to be seen by a Rheumatologist there are some things you can do in the intervening period to keep yourself well.

### Guidance for Patients

Whilst you are waiting for your appointment the Versus Arthritis website has information booklets and videos available online via the following links. We know that exercise is important and safe for patients with arthritis and we would encourage you to keep active:

[www.versusarthritis.org](http://www.versusarthritis.org)

We would particularly recommend following the advice on keeping yourself well whilst waiting, including their expert exercise videos:

[While you're waiting | Versus Arthritis](#)

### Other good sources of information include

- National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society (NRAS) <https://nras.org.uk/>
- Royal osteoporosis society <https://theros.org.uk/>

We know that lifestyle changes such as stopping smoking and losing weight can help arthritis. There is lots of information on eating well, exercise and lifestyle changes on the following link:

[Live Well - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

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

#### GP surgeries are still open

Please contact your GP surgery for advice if you feel your condition is deteriorating.

GP surgeries are still open but may be working differently to how they did before the COVID-19 pandemic. GP practices are utilising telephone, online and video consultations. Face-to-face appointments are still being given to those who need it.

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GP surgeries can contact the Rheumatology department for advice if needed.

### 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.