

Respiratory - Endoscopy Lower Respiratory tract (Bronchoscopy)

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 are able to 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.

Nothing to add

Guidance for Patients

A bronchoscopy is a test which is used to help diagnose your lung condition. The bronchoscope is a fine, flexible tube with a fibre-optic light source. It is passed either through the nose or the mouth with the aid of local anaesthetic. Bronchoscopy is performed using light sedation, and can therefore usually be done as a day case. It is usually performed to enable us to interpret any unusual appearances on chest x-rays or CT scan. A bronchoscopy will give us much more detailed information. It will also enable small specimens of lung tissue (biopsies) to be taken during the procedure if required. Sometimes this may also involve an ultrasound probe (EBUS) to direct the biopsy outside the bronchial (breathing) tubes.

A doctor or nurse will see you prior to this procedure and will explain to you why you require it and what to expect. They will discuss with you whether sedation will be required.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

On the day of the procedure, we ask that you do not eat or drink anything for at least 4 hours. However, you should take all your usual medication, unless otherwise instructed. The full effects of the sedation can take up to 24 hours to wear off. Therefore it is essential that you have somebody to collect you and be at home with you during this period. You will be unable to drive.

While you are awaiting treatment, we recommend if you smoke that you consider stopping. Support is available from www.livewelldorset.co.uk

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

If your health deteriorates whilst you are awaiting your tests, particularly if you have new or worsening haemoptysis, that you contact one of our lung care nurse specialists for advice.

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

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.

Contact Us

If you have concerns after your bronchoscopy please contact our lung care nurse specialists

0300 019 8338 (Poole)

0300 019 6586 (Bournemouth)