

A photograph of a person's midsection. They are wearing a light pink long-sleeved shirt and dark blue jeans with a brown belt. Their right hand is pressed against their upper right abdomen, suggesting discomfort or pain. The image is framed by large, overlapping blue geometric shapes.

Gastroenterology

First Outpatient Appointment

Guidance for patients

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.

Referral to treatment waiting times are available at:

[Gastroenterology – Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust – My Planned Care NHS](#)

Gastroenterology Department

The Gastroenterology Team diagnose and treat a wide range of conditions and illnesses, either via outpatient services or through [endoscopies](#). These diseases include:

- Inflammatory bowel diseases: including Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis
- Alcohol-related disease of the liver and gastrointestinal tract: including gastric ulcers and liver cirrhosis
- Primary biliary cirrhosis: this is a long-term liver disease in which the bile ducts in the liver are damaged, leading to a build-up of bile. This damages the liver and eventually leads to scarring (cirrhosis)
- Pancreatitis: this is a disease in which the pancreas becomes inflamed. Pancreatic damage happens when the digestive enzymes are activated before they are released into the small intestine and begin attacking the pancreas
- Coeliac disease: if you have this condition, your small intestine fails to digest and absorb food. This is due to a sensitivity of the intestinal lining to the protein gliadin, which is contained in gluten

We offer a range of services to diagnose these diseases, including endoscopy services such as colonoscopy and gastroscopy, and gut lining biopsies.

The Gastroenterology Department provides outpatient services at Harrogate District Hospital, as well as Ripon Community Hospital and Wetherby Health Centre.

Referral

Patients access the gastroenterology services via referral, either from a GP or from one consultant to another.

Gastrointestinal nursing

Our main role is to support and provide information to patients who have been diagnosed with a gastrointestinal (GI) cancer, as well as their families and carers. We often become involved during the investigation stages and at diagnosis.

We support patients with colon and rectal cancers through treatment and beyond. We provide follow-up care in a health and wellbeing clinic in the Sir Robert Ogden Macmillan Centre for patients who have completed their treatment.

Treatments for patients with oesophageal, stomach, or pancreatic cancer take place at St James's University Hospital, Leeds. However, our Macmillan GI Nursing Team may continue to provide telephone based support to these patients.

The Macmillan GI Nursing Team is made up of two clinical nurse specialists and a cancer care coordinator. We work as part of the GI multi-disciplinary team (MDT), liaising closely with consultants and other healthcare professionals from Harrogate District Hospital and St James's University Hospital. These include the stoma care nurses, who work within the hospital and community, and the upper GI and hepatobiliary clinical nurse specialists at St James's University Hospital.

What to do if your health is deteriorating

You can get information and help about a variety of common problems and find useful ways you can help yourself from the Harrogate Health Hub website at <https://www.harrogatehealthhub.co.uk>

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

If you experience an increase in pain, inability to weight bear on this limb or a significant reduction in mobility, you should in the first instance contact your General Practitioner for review and advice.

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

[Find a GP in the region](#)

Contact us

If you want to discuss any of the above please call: 01423 885959 or email hdft.hello@nhs.net