The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Rheumatology

Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS and how quickly we are able to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to tell you exactly when you will receive your appointment date.

Please use the links below to read a letter which explains more about waiting times at Leeds Teaching Hospitals.

- Waiting times letter for patients
- Easy read waiting times letter for patients

Guidance for Patients

Your hospital treatment

The rheumatology service provides care for patients with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases.

The team are based at Chapel Allerton Hospital but your appointment may take place at one of our other hospitals in Leeds. The hospital you will be seen at will depend on the type of treatment that you need.

Our rheumatology web page includes details about the different services and specialist clinics provided, and you may find the team's patient information leaflets helpful in answering any questions you have. Whatever your condition, we always plan your treatment options with the professionals in the respiratory team to ensure the best outcome for you.

Our coming into hospital for an operation leaflet includes what happens when you arrive at the hospital, your recovery, a map of the hospital and useful information about who you might meet and what to expect.

Improving your health

It is important that while you are waiting for your appointment or surgery you remain as active as you can. Having a well-balanced diet is also important, as is reducing any weight that may be impacting on your general health.

If you need an operation as part of your treatment, please take a look at our Shape Up For Surgery website. This website includes a four step plan and further information about what having surgery at Leeds Teaching Hospitals involves.

If you smoke, please contact One You Leeds for support with stopping smoking. This will have huge benefits and may reduce your risk of a chest infection if you are having surgery.

If you take regular medication, please follow the instructions you were given when it was prescribed to ensure that you stay well. Your doctor or pharmacist will be happy to answer any questions you have about your medication.

The contents of this information has been reviewed and approved by Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

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. The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening such as severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.

GP surgeries are still open

If you experience an increase in pain or a change to any symptoms, you should in the first instance contact your GP for review and advice. Your GP will be able to contact the hospital if they feel you need to be seen sooner.

Mental Health Support

Waiting for hospital treatment can be a worrying time, so please don't delay asking for help if you are struggling with your mental health.

If you've been feeling low or very anxious and this is affecting your day-to-day life, you should consider going to see your GP (doctor).

We've also included the websites below which include a variety of ways to get support.

MindWell has self-help resources and tools to help you understand and manage problems like anxiety, stress and low moods.

The Leeds Mental Wellbeing Service offers free online courses that can help you to cope better with problems such as stress and anxiety, panic attacks and depression. The service also provides group and face-to-face sessions and workshops. If you're over 17 years of age and registered with a Leeds GP, you can self-refer on the service website.

Contact Us

If you have a question about your hospital treatment, please get in touch with us using the rheumatology contact details on our website. If you are waiting for your appointment, we will write to you as soon as we can with a date and time.