

Gastroenterology – Endoscopy of Colon (Colonoscopy)

Introduction

The Covid 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 in conjunction with clinicians who are responsible for your care.

Guidance for Patients

Whilst you await your treatment, it is important that you try to support your health and wellbeing. This can be starting with small, positive changes to your lifestyle:

- Staying as active as possible may lead to important health benefits including: weight loss; lower cholesterol levels; prevention of joint stiffness; increased self-confidence; improved circulation; and improved sugar control in diabetes. However, remember to exercise at your own pace.
- If you smoke, please consider contacting [Yorkshire Smokefree Service](#) for help and support to stop smoking. Stopping smoking has proven benefits for you including: improved circulation and normalised oxygen levels in the blood making breathing and walking easier; a reduced risk of blood clots and leg ulcers; lower risk of heart disease, heart attack and stroke; and you are more likely to respond better to medication when nicotine is out of the system and may receive a lower dosage, for example, insulin.
- Healthy eating can help control your weight, blood pressure and cholesterol levels. For most people, the move towards a healthy diet means eating more fruit, vegetables, and oily fish. The [Eatwell Guide](#) shows how much of what we eat overall should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet.
- It is important to continue to take any prescribed medications whilst waiting for your treatment, unless advised by a healthcare professional to stop. Your GP or Pharmacist will be happy to answer any questions you have about your medication.

We have published leaflets that have been specifically designed to support you and your condition. Please find the links below:

[Having a flexible sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy \(Easy Read\)](#)

[Having a diagnostic colonoscopy](#)

[Instructions for stopping you warfarin before an endoscopy: standard risk](#)

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

Because of COVID19 it can be hard to know what to do if you're unwell. It is important to get medical help if you think you need it.

- **GP Surgeries**

If you experience any change in your symptoms you must contact your **GP** for review and advice. Your GP will contact the Hospital if they feel that you need to be seen sooner.

- **Urgent Medical Help**

If you need urgent medical help, please use the [NHS 111 Online Service](#). The **111 Online** service asks several questions about your symptoms to assist you get the help you need. You can also call **111** from either a landline or mobile phone if you cannot get help online.

- **Emergency Medical Help**

For life-threatening emergencies (for example loss of consciousness, chest pain or breathing difficulties) please call **999** immediately.

- **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.

The [Sheffield Mental Health Guide](#) is a useful website to help you search for specific support, listing over 300 mental health services across the city with contact details. There is also an [urgent help section](#) if you are really struggling or feel that you are in crisis.

Contact Us

If you have any questions about your treatment, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us using the [contact details](#) section on our website. If you would like to contact us via email, please use the following email address: sth.myplannedcare@nhs.net. We will be in touch with you regarding a date and time for your treatment as soon as we can.