

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 by clinicians.

By supporting aspects of your health and well-being whilst you wait, it can help you to stay as well as possible and support any surgery or treatment that you may need. The main components are physical activity, psychological well-being and healthy diet. There is also information on other changes such as stopping smoking, alcohol reduction and managing pain.

How this aims to help you:

- Better response to treatment
- Quicker recovery
- Fewer problems during any treatment
- Reduced anxiety and improved mood
- Improved energy levels
- Improve your general fitness and other health conditions
- Be able to do your normal activities

Guidance for Patients

While you are waiting for your outpatient appointment or surgery, there are things you can do to help you to stay well and get ready for any surgery or treatment. This will also help you make a better recovery.

Below are some health topics that can really make a difference. Even making these changes just 6 weeks before an operation can be a real help but these are changes that could help you for the rest of your life.

Smoking

It is in your best interests to stop smoking as soon as possible, especially before surgery. This will reduce the risk of any breathing problems during and after surgery.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stop-smoking-treatments/>

Alcohol

Drinking too much alcohol may slow your recovery and also make it more likely that you get an infection. Men and women are advised not to drink more than 14 units of alcohol a week, and we ask our patients to try to keep to these limits. If you would like more information, please visit these webpages:

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/for-your-body/drink-less/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/alcohol-misuse/>

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

Diet

Eating a healthy diet will improve wound healing and reduce muscle weakness and tiredness during your recovery. A good diet will also help you fight infection.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/>

Obesity and weight loss

Trying to lose weight can be difficult, yet the best way to help tackle this is to eat a healthy calorie-reduced diet and exercise regularly. Even losing a small amount of weight will help. Set yourself a goal that you can make.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/obesity/>

Physical activity – moderate level

We should all take some form of moderate exercise every day. This will make you stronger, reduce breathing issues and build up stamina. These will all help you get better more quickly.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/>
<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/>

Diabetes

If you have diabetes, we ask that you try to keep your sugar levels within the limits as agreed with your doctor or nurse. Poorly controlled diabetes can be a serious concern especially if undergoing surgery. Please don't hesitate to talk to your clinical team if you are concerned.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diabetes/>

Mental health and wellbeing

Many patients face concerns and anxieties before going into hospital, or mentally dealing with an ongoing condition or illness. There are many resources that can help to prepare yourself mentally.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/>

Managing pain

Many patients get aches and pains in their muscle and joints. This resource will help you to manage these.

<https://www.csp.org.uk/conditions/managing-pain-home>

Medication

Please continue to take your medication as prescribed by your doctor. The clinical team will contact you if any changes to your medications are required before your procedure.

Further information

If you require any support for patients with Learning disabilities or learning difficulties prior to surgery or treatment, please see the link below for information.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/learning-disabilities/>

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

The Live well web site has lots of Advice, tips and tools to help you make the best choices about your health and wellbeing: [Live Well - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

The York & Scarborough Trust anaesthetic team have also compiled a wide variety of advice for patients waiting for surgery to help to maximise their health and wellbeing before their treatment. Fitter patients who are able to improve their health and activity levels recover from surgery more quickly. What you do now can have a really big impact on your recovery.

[York Perioperative Medicine Service - Patients](https://www.yorkperioperativemedicine.nhs.uk/patients/useful-leaflets--links/)

<https://www.yorkperioperativemedicine.nhs.uk/patients/useful-leaflets--links/>

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

Your referral will have been reviewed and triaged by the Specialist team responsible for your care to grade your clinical priority based on the information in the referral.

If you are concerned that your condition or symptoms are deteriorating since you were referred to us, please contact the person who referred you to the hospital.

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 – For example; severe bleeding, suspected stroke, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.

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.

Contact Us

Website: <https://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk>

Email: pals@york.nhs.uk

Tel: 01904 631313