

Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has meant some operations and procedures have been postponed, leading to understandable concern for those waiting. We are working hard to get people seen as quickly as possible.

The NHS in Greater Manchester has developed a resource called [While You Wait](https://whileyouwait.org.uk) to support patients waiting for hospital treatment. Visit whileyouwait.org.uk for more information.

The information is aimed at helping you arrive for your appointment or treatment in the best possible physical and mental health. Maintaining and improving your overall wellbeing will also lead to faster recovery if you require surgery.

Take Your Medication

Whilst waiting for your hospital treatment continue to follow medical advice and take any medications as prescribed.

Make a list of any medicines you are taking, including prescriptions, medicines you've bought yourself or any alternative treatments and take this along to any appointments you have.

If you need to stop any medication before your procedure, you will be given clear instructions by the hospital at your pre-operative assessment. If you have any queries don't hesitate to get in touch with your hospital team.

Looking After Your Physical Health

Keeping yourself healthy before your operation is important. Visit [While You Wait](https://whileyouwait.org.uk) for information on how you can maintain a healthy weight, get active, quit smoking and reduce your alcohol intake.

There are steps you can take now to help make your surgery or treatment a success. The national [Better Health website](https://www.betterhealth.gov.uk) can also help you to kickstart your health ahead of your operation and prepare you for a healthier, happier future.

Keep Moving

There are many changes you can make to reduce the risks of surgery. Your heart and lungs have to work harder after an operation to help the body to heal. If you are already active, you will be used to this. While you are waiting for your operation, try and increase your activity levels. Activities that improve your strength and balance will also be useful for your recovery. Always check with your doctor first what type of exercise is most appropriate for you.

No matter how much you do, physical activity is good for your body and mind. Adults should aim to be active every day. Some is good – more is better still. A daily brisk walk can boost your energy, lift your mood and make everyday activities easier.

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Try [these tools, tips and special offers](#) to move more every day.

Whether you are looking for a walking route to explore your local area or somewhere new, or want to help someone you know join a local walking group, we hope the [Greater Manchester Walking website](#) will help you.

This website has lots of tips and resources to help you make walking part of your everyday life, and provides ways in which you can contribute to creating places that are more attractive, safe and supportive of walking.

GM Active is a collective of 12 community leisure organisations in Greater Manchester that are working together to get more people physically active. [Click here](#) to find out more about their membership and how to access in your local area.

Maintaining a healthy weight

Maintaining a healthy weight reduces the risk of complications during surgery. If your operation is not urgent and you are overweight, taking time to lose weight before going ahead may be of great benefit to you.

Losing weight is not about getting it right – it's about getting started. Making small, simple changes can really help you shed the pounds. Get started today with our tips, support and specialist offers.

You can download a [free NHS weight loss planning app](#) to help you start healthier eating habits, be more active and start losing weight.

Food and Nutrition

Your body needs to repair itself after surgery – eating a healthy diet before and after your surgery can really help. There are some useful resources:

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

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/support/healthy-living/healthy-eating/healthy-eating-toolkit>

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/publications/healthy-eating-and-drinking/eat-better>

<https://www.bda.uk.com/resourceDetail/printPdf/?resource=healthy-eating>

<http://www.nutrition.org.uk/>

FULL TIME MEALS – TOM KERRIDGE

Recipe ideas from Tom Kerridge and Marcus Rashford that do not need lots of ingredients equipment or skill.

[Nutritional Guidelines – Independent Food Aid Network UK](#)

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Quit Smoking

If you're going into hospital for an operation, it's strongly advised that you stop smoking as soon as possible. Quitting smoking before an operation will reduce your chances of complications and speed up your recovery after surgery. It will also make our stay at hospital more comfortable as smoking is not permitted on hospital grounds.

Try to quit smoking as soon as you can, as this will give your body as much time as possible to repair itself before surgery. The best way to quit smoking is with a combination of personalised support and stop smoking aids, like nicotine replacement.

Free quitting services

With help, you're much more likely to quit smoking than if you use willpower alone. Visit [Make Smoking History](#) to get free access to the latest quitting aids, one-to-one advice and [support in your local area](#).

Alternatively, you can talk to a friendly stop smoking advisor over the phone. Call the Greater Manchester Stop Smoking Helping free on 0300 123 1044 between 9am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 11am to 4pm Saturday and Sunday, including bank holidays.

You can also speak to your GP or local pharmacist for help to stop smoking.

You can also keep motivated, monitor your health improvements and track how much money you save when you quit with the Smoke Free App. Greater Manchester residents can get access to the Pro version (worth £60) when they sign up at [Smoke Free App](#) (T&Cs apply).

Get help to quit and stay smoke-free in hospital

In many hospitals across Greater Manchester, there are teams of specialist stop smoking nurses who can help you quit smoking. When you arrive at hospital, you'll be asked if you smoke and visited at your bedside by a stop smoking nurse. They will give you one-to-one support and may prescribe you nicotine replacement or stop smoking medication to help you stay smokefree.

These onsite stop smoking services are run by [The CURE Project](#) and currently available in Wythenshawe, Oldham, Wigan, Bury, Rochdale, Stockport, Tameside and Salford.

Alcohol

Alcohol can have many effects on the body, but importantly it can reduce the liver's ability to produce the building blocks necessary for healing. Make sure you are drinking within the recommended limits, or lower, to improve your body's ability to heal after surgery.

Cutting back on alcohol can be a really effective way to improve your health, boost your energy, lose weight and save money. Any reduction in the amount you drink every week will be beneficial – and with the right support, it's easier than you think. There are some simple tips and tools to help you start cutting down today.

You can also download the free [Drink Free Days app](#).

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Get medical advice before you stop drinking if you have physical withdrawal symptoms (like shaking, sweating or feeling anxious until you have your first drink of the day). It can be dangerous to stop drinking too quickly without proper help. There's lots of support out there.

Find your [local alcohol support service now](#), or [call Drinkline on 0300 123 1110](#) for free, confidential help for anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's drinking.

Good Mental Health

Your mental wellbeing is just as important as your physical health. Visit [While You Wait](#) for information and advice that will help you arrive for your appointment with the best possible mental health.

In the time before your surgery, you can take simple steps to improve your mental health. Maintaining and improving your overall wellbeing will lead to a faster recovery if you require surgery. Once you are referred by your GP, the waiting journey begins. Make the most of the time before you see your specialist.

Looking after your mental health

Having good mental health helps us relax, achieve and enjoy our lives more. We have expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing.

Mental health issues – We all have mental health, and life is full of ups and downs for everyone. Here you will find expert advice, practical tips and plenty of help and support if you're feeling stressed, anxious, low, struggling with relationships or sleep.

Here you will find some [general information on mental health issues](#) and some [top tips to improve your mental wellbeing](#). Apps to support your health, mental health and wellbeing:

- Find tested and approved mental health apps [here](#).
- [Feeling anxious?](#)
- [Feeling stressed?](#)
- [Feeling low?](#)
- [Trouble sleeping?](#)

Mental health and wellbeing support in Greater Manchester – all ages

[This booklet](#) contains practical information about things you can do now to look after your mental health and wellbeing, and how you can support others.

Free text and online support:

SHOUT. With this 24/7 crisis text messaging service, you can send a text message any time of day or night wherever you are – every conversation is with a real person. Just text SHOUT to 85258.

You don't need an app or data and there's no registration process. It's silent and won't appear on your phone bill. Confidential and anonymous.

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Mental health and wellbeing support in Greater Manchester – aged 16+ years

Living Life To The Full

Resources for improving feelings, beating stress, sleeping better and boosting ability to live well. [This programme](#) provides key information using everyday, non-complex language and is available on the go or at home, 24/7.

Through this resource, you have access to Living Life To The Full, a general course that covers low mood and stress, and helps people to feel happier and more relaxed. There is also Reclaim Your Life, which addresses coping and living with long-term illness. Finally, it includes Enjoy Your Baby, for new parents and parents to be, which helps them to feel more confident, build a bond with their baby and enjoy being a parent.

All E-books are available in English and in 15 community languages.

SilverCloud – aged 16 years+

These online programmes help ease your levels of stress, sleep better or build resilience. You can choose to use any of the programmes. They are self-help, confidential and secure. Instant access to self-help support can be found [here](#).

Free text and online support – children and young people aged 11 to 18 years: Kooth

Kooth is an emotional wellbeing and digital mental health support service available to children and young people aged 11-25. Providing immediate access to an online community of peers and a team of experienced, accredited counsellors. The service is free and there are no waiting times, no referrals, no thresholds to meet and complete anonymity.

Kooth is open for support 365 days a year, between 12noon – 10pm and 6pm – 10pm on weekends and holidays.

To find more information and to sign up [click here](#)

24/7 Crisis Lines: All ages

If you feel you need mental health support please contact one of these 24/7 crisis lines:

Bolton, Manchester, Salford and Trafford: 0800 953 0285 (freephone)

Bury, Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale, Oldham, Stockport, Tameside & Glossop: 0800 014 9995 (freephone)

Wigan: 0800 051 3253 (freephone)

If there's an immediate risk of danger to life, you should ring 999

Shining a Light on Suicide

Whether you're feeling suicidal, worried that someone else is, or have lost someone to suicide, you're not alone. Whatever you're going through, [Shining a Light on Suicide](#) will help you get the advice and support you need.

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Other resources:

Beat is the UK's eating disorder charity. Beat has lots of useful advice for adults and children
<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/get-information-and-support/>

Helpline – <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/get-information-and-support/get-help-for-myself/i-need-support-now/helplines/>

If you've noticed changes in the way you are thinking or feeling over the past few weeks or months that concern you and cause you distress, see your GP or current mental health practitioner.

If you need urgent medical attention but it is not a life-threatening situation, you should first call 111. If you think life is at risk, you should call 999.