



Introduction

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS and its 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 to help you stay healthy while waiting to attend the hospital and should be read in conjunction with the speciality level guidance appropriate to your condition.

Information while you are waiting for your appointment

Bradford Teaching Hospitals is here for you and we are doing our best to get you the care you need as soon as possible. While you are waiting for a hospital appointment, we wanted to let you know that there is more support available to you. Each of our specialities communicate with patients on their waiting lists, but you can also now access the [NHS My Planned Care patient website](#) – a national website which gives you access to the latest average wait time information, as well as helpful advice and support while you wait. www.nhs.uk also has health advice and support around managing your condition.

Take Your Medication

You are advised to continue with your normal prescribed medication/s as instructed by your health care team. This is because you have been prescribed the medication for a specific reason so missing a dose could make your health worse. Your GP or pharmacist will be happy to answer any questions you have about your medication.

Guidance for Patients

While you are waiting for an appointment or operation, it's important that you continue to look after yourself. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle includes eating well, keeping physically active, reducing your alcohol intake and not smoking. This document provides you with links and webpages to information to help you stay healthy while waiting to attend hospital.

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. The NHS website regarding eating well provides information and guidance about eating a healthy, balanced diet, visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/>

NHS One You www.nhs.uk/ONEYOU is a source of support on losing weight (12 week online weight loss programme), plus information on sleep, stress and mental wellbeing.

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The contents of this information has been reviewed and approved by the Communicating with Patients Approval Group at Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

Exercise

Improved fitness levels reduce complications when having any procedure and allows you to leave hospital and return to your normal quality of life more quickly.

Talk to your GP or healthcare team about how much and what sort of exercise you can do, as well as what to avoid. Your GP may be able to refer you to an exercise scheme at a local gym or they may refer you to a physiotherapist, who can work out a fitness plan for you. Keeping active could include just doing 10 minutes of walking every day or you can do chair based exercises.

There are a number of online resources and information about local services available to support your physical and mental wellbeing at www.mylivingwell.co.uk. If you do not have access to the internet but would like to know about what you can do to maintain a healthy lifestyle whilst you wait to be seen at hospital, please contact the local Bradford Living Well Team on 01274 438884.

No matter how much you do, physical activity is good for your body and mind. For NHS support, please go to <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/>

At the Trust we want to support all patients who are coming into hospital for surgery to move more in the weeks leading up to their operation, to help you prepare your body and recover more quickly. Take a look at our shape up for surgery resources please visit:

<https://www.bradfordhospitals.nhs.uk/shape-up-for-surgery/physical/>

Alcohol

It is very important to safely reduce the amount of alcohol you drink before your operation. Alcohol can weaken your immune system, putting you at risk of developing complications and prolonging your recovery. It is recommended to drink no more than 14 units of alcohol a week, spread across 3 days or more. That is around 6 medium (175ml) glasses of wine, or 6 pints of 4% beer. For further support visit the following websites:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-advice/alcohol-support/>

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

Smoking

Stopping smoking is the single biggest thing you can do to improve your health. You should aim to stop smoking as soon as you can before your operation. This will help to prevent delayed wound healing, wound infection and chest infections (pneumonia). If you need help to stop smoking, please speak to your GP or visit the following webpages:

<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/>

<https://mylivingwell.co.uk/smoking/support-to-quit>

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Improve Your Health

We want to make it easier for everyone in Bradford District and Craven to live a healthier, more active life. This means encouraging and helping people make good choices for themselves and their families. There are lots of websites and apps available to help you manage your health and wellbeing these are:

The NHS website: www.nhs.uk

Helping you take control of your health and wellbeing.

The Better Health website: <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/>

Healthy changes start with little changes. It includes information for mind (called Every Mind Matters) and body, as well as recommended Apps.

The Living Well website: <https://mylivingwell.co.uk/>

Has advice and information to help you be healthier and more active. It has information about local services and activities that you can get involved in, as well as a healthy living quiz to help you recognise where you might be able to make improvements to your health and wellbeing. The website also has information about smoking, mental health and wellbeing, eating well, drugs and alcohol, in addition to getting enough exercise and long term conditions (such as asthma).

Good Mental Health

We offer a range of mental health services for people of all ages living in Bradford, Airedale, Wharfedale or Craven. Services include hospital based mental health care at our dedicated sites: Lynfield Mount and Airedale Centre for Mental Health.

Looking after your mind is as important as looking after your body. It's important that you get support if you are feeling stressed, anxious, depressed or lonely. Sometimes it could be a case of just reaching out to someone you know and having a chat. If you need support please visit the Health Minds website, <https://www.healthyminds.services/>, this includes links to services that help children and young people as well as support for adults.

Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it is not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit www.nhs.uk, NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Contact Us

The Trust's website can be accessed via: <https://www.bradfordhospitals.nhs.uk/>

Patient Experience team at: patient.experience@bthft.nhs.uk or call: 01274 364810, Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 4.00pm