



## **GENERAL HEALTH ADVICE**

*Patient Information Sheet*

*Cobham and Epsom Day  
Surgery Units*

## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the ability of all healthcare providers to provide routine elective services. While we continue to deliver planned care, including diagnostic testing and treatment, we recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and this may have caused you disruption and delays.

We thank you for your patience, we are working hard to treat everyone on our waiting list. Please rest assured that we are prioritising care according to clinical need and the length of time that you have been waiting.

This document provides you with information on how you are able to support yourself while waiting to attend our hospitals.

## Why choose Epsomedical for your NHS treatment

Epsomedical is an independent hospital group founded in 1997 and dedicated to serving NHS patients. We operate two independent hospitals in Surrey; Cobham Day Surgery at Cobham Hospital and Epsom Day Surgery at the Old Cottage Hospital, Epsom.

Our hospitals specialise in providing day case surgery, have no overnight beds and are focussed exclusively on elective care and a small number of diagnostic services. Our day surgery units are convenient, friendly, efficient and provide welcome services to local people.

Ensuring our patients receive high quality, safe care with excellent health outcomes and experience is at the centre of all we do.

To find more about our hospitals or services offered visit

<https://www.epsomedical.co.uk/>

## Take your medication



If you have been prescribed medication to manage your condition while you await treatment, it is important that you follow the instructions from the doctor or pharmacist who has prescribed this.

When taking medication, you should always:

- take it at right time of day and at the dose recommended by your GP
- check the instructions, or your care plan, to make sure you're taking it properly. Some medicines should only be taken before a meal, or with water or food
- use your own supply and never take medication prescribed for someone else

It's important to let your GP, pharmacist or the Consultant in charge of your care know if you experience any side effects as they may want to change the dose or try a different medicine for you.

Before taking any over-the-counter medication, or supplements, that you can buy without a prescription, it's important to check with your pharmacist as sometimes these can affect other medication you're taking.

## Keep Moving



Whatever your age, there's strong scientific evidence that being physically active can help you lead a healthier and happier life.

To stay healthy, the [UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines, on GOV.UK](#), state that adults should try to be active every day and aim to do at least 150 minutes of physical activity over a week, through a variety of activities.

For most people, the easiest way to get moving is to make activity part of everyday life, like [walking for health](#) or cycling instead of using the car to get around. However, the more you do, the better, and taking part in activities such as sports and exercise will make you even healthier.

If you'd like to get active, but don't know where to start, an exercise referral service can help.

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

## Improve Your Health



Ensuring that you maintain a healthy lifestyle will reduce the risk of surgery and can improve your postoperative recovery.

There are a number of ways that you can keep yourself healthy while awaiting treatment:

- Try and increase your activity levels whilst you are waiting for your operation. No matter how much you do, physical activity is good for your body and mind. Even short bursts of exercise make surgery safer. A few minutes here and there add up. It all makes a difference. Activities that improve your strength and balance may even speed up your recovery.
- Maintain a healthy weight as the risks of complications during surgery can be reduced by maintaining a healthy weight. If you are waiting for your operation and you are overweight, it may be of great benefit to you to consider losing weight before your planned operation.

- Healthy eating. After surgery your body will need to repair itself and eating a healthy diet before and after your surgery will help. Healthy eating is about enjoying your meals and at the same time having a balance of different foods.

A balanced diet consists of:

- At least five portions of fruit and vegetables each day
- Potatoes, bread, rice and pasta
- Beans, pulses, fish, eggs and meat
- Dairy and alternatives
- Oils and spreads

For more information regarding healthy eating please go to:

[www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/)

- Stop smoking or using tobacco; to help you make decisions, your stop-smoking adviser or healthcare professional should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. For free professional support [contact your local Stop Smoking Service](#)
- Alcohol can have many effects on the body, but importantly it can damage the liver's ability to produce the building blocks necessary to help your body heal, fight infection and reduces the risks of complications. Staying within the recommended limits will improve your body's ability to heal after surgery. Get medical advice before you stop as it can be dangerous to stop drinking too quickly without proper help. Drink Free Days App: A free app that provides simple and practical tips to help control your drinking. Visit [www.nhs.uk/better-health/drink-less/](http://www.nhs.uk/better-health/drink-less/)

For more information on managing a healthy lifestyle:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/>
- <https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2018/03/creating-healthy-habits>

## Good mental health



Surgery can be daunting for most people. Anxiety and depression are very common both before and after surgery.

As many as one in four people will experience some form of mental illness at some point in their lives. Whether you're concerned about your medical treatment, feel overwhelmed after being diagnosed with a new medical condition, or just feel a bit stressed or down – it is important to know that you are not alone and there are a number of services that are here to help.

### Talking Therapies:

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/talking-therapies-medicine-treatments/talking-therapies-and-counselling/nhs-talking-therapies/>

[www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/top-tips-to-improve-your-mental-wellbeing](http://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/top-tips-to-improve-your-mental-wellbeing)

To find a local NHS urgent mental health helpline (England) please follow the link below:

[www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-healthhelpline](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-healthhelpline)

### MIND

Mind provides support for people who are experiencing or recovering from mental health problems to engage in activities in the community as part of their recovery. These include activities relating to sport and exercise, family and neighbourhood, faith and cultural communities, education and arts and culture.

Referrals to this service are made via your community mental health team. Referral forms and more details can be found on:

1. <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/>
2. <https://www.mind.org.uk/need-urgent-help/>
3. <https://www.poetsin.com/contact-us/>

Details of other mental health support services can be found on the [South West London CCG website](#) and the [Surrey and Borders website](#).

Self-referral to local community mental health and psychological therapies are also as follows:

- Sutton - Sutton Uplift 020 3513 4044  
[www.suttonuplift.co.uk](http://www.suttonuplift.co.uk)
- Merton - Merton Uplift 020 3513 5888  
[www.mertonuplift.nhs.uk](http://www.mertonuplift.nhs.uk)
- Surrey - Mind Matters 0300 330 5450  
[www.mindmattersnhs.co.uk](http://www.mindmattersnhs.co.uk)

Need help now?

A 24-hour mental health telephone support line is available for people who are experiencing mental distress. The helpline can be used by patients, carers and anyone who needs advice, help and assistance while in crisis or facing difficulties dealing with mental illness.

To speak to someone now, call Samaritans on **116 123** or text **SHOUT** to **85258**

Official website: [Samaritans](#)

If you are worried about causing harm to yourself or someone else, please call 999 immediately.