

## Rheumatology – Infusion

**Rheumatology** is a branch of medicine that deals with the investigation, diagnosis and management of people living with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases. These diseases are usually caused by problems in the immune system, inflammation, infections, or the gradual deterioration of joints, muscles and bones. Rheumatic and musculoskeletal conditions affect soft tissues, joints, bones, cartilage, tendons, ligaments and muscles.

**Infusion of therapeutic substance:** Certain types of arthritis and other autoimmune diseases can be managed with a type of treatment called infusion therapy.

### Introduction

The COVID-19 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 can support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital.

### Guidance for patients

While waiting for your procedure it is important to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

#### Staying active and medically fit

It is important that while you are waiting for your surgery you remain as active and as medically fit as possible. If you have any long-standing conditions such as high blood pressure you should get this reviewed at your GP surgery to make sure it remains well controlled. This will also help prevent any unnecessary delays when you come for your pre-operative assessment.

- [Better Health – Get Active](#) – includes tips on getting active for all, including the downloadable Active 10 app, as well as tailored advice for those living with a long-term condition

#### Stopping smoking and weight management

Maintaining a well-balanced diet is important, as is reducing any excessive weight that may be impacting on your general health. If you are a current smoker it would be advisable to seek support to help with stopping: advice can be found at your local pharmacy or GP surgery.

- [Live Well Stay Well](#) has been commissioned to provide free stop smoking and weight management support to the Buckinghamshire community.

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- If you are not ready to quit just yet but would like more information on how to protect your family, [Smoke Free Families](#) advises on how to make your home and car smoke free.
- [Eat well](#) – information and guidance about eating a healthy, balanced diet
- [Better Health – Healthier Families](#) – includes sugar facts and recommended daily amounts, foods to watch out for, how to cut down on sugar, healthier food swaps and a link to download the NHS free NHS Food Scanner app.

## What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

If your condition suddenly worsens whilst you are waiting you should seek advice.

### 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](http://www.nhs.uk). The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

### Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening – severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.

### GP surgeries

GP practice staff are also helping patients to manage their conditions at home. 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.

[Find a list of GP practices in Buckinghamshire and their contact details](#)

## For more information

Visit our website [www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/rheumatology](http://www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/rheumatology)

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