



Advice for patients attending for Elective Surgery/Procedure during coronavirus (Covid-19)

Why are you receiving this information?

You have been sent this information because you are waiting for an operation or procedure. In addition to the standard risks associated with your procedure, there are additional potential risks to your well-being associated with your operation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite a low incidence of COVID-19 in Dorset, and the additional precautions you will need to take before your operation (see below), it is still possible that you may get a COVID infection around the time of your operation. If this happens, you will have a high risk of requiring treatment in intensive care and a higher risk than normal of a severe infection, which may result in death.

Unfortunately, we are unable to quantify the risk as our knowledge of this disease is evolving. So far we have been fortunate to have a lower number of cases of COVID-19 compared to some other areas of the country. This means that we have the opportunity to restart our elective operations, but we are committed to doing this safely.

How can you reduce the risk of COVID-19?

In order to reduce the risk of COVID infection around the time of your surgery, it is necessary for you to understand and comply with the following precautions. **You must remain in strict isolation for 14 days prior to your date of surgery.** This means that you **AND** those that you live with in your household must:



- Not go to work, school, or public areas
- Avoid public transport or taxis (you may still attend hospital visits)
- Limit contact with other members of the household
- Continue to wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, using soap and water, or hand sanitiser.
- Where possible, you should not go out, even to buy food or other essentials,
- Limit the time you spend with family members in shared spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas, and keep shared spaces well ventilated.
- If you share a bathroom, try to use it first or just after it has been cleaned.
- Do not share towels or tea towels.
- Avoid smoking and limit your alcohol intake to help optimise your health prior to your operation and to aid in your recovery.
- Continue daily exercise but only within your house. See ideas for

exercises at home on the NHS website (www.nhs.uk).

What is the hospital doing to decrease the risk of COVID-19?

In order to minimise possible spread of COVID at Dorset County Hospital:



- The hospital has enhanced cleaning procedures to limit spread of the virus
- Staff members are instructed not to work if they (or members of their household) have symptoms of COVID-19 until the result of a screening test is known
- As an additional precaution to prevent virus spread, visitors are not presently able to visit patients
- The hospital is continually updating advice as we learn more about COVID-19.

What should you do if you, or someone that you live with, becomes unwell before your operation?

Please let the admissions office know if either **you or any members of your household** have any of the following symptoms in the 14-day period before your operation:



- High temperature or fever (above 37.8°C)
- Loss or change of sense of smell and/or taste
- New persistent cough
- Unusual sweating episode or excessive unexplained fatigue
- Any contact with a person who has been confirmed as COVID positive in the last 14 days

Will you be tested for COVID-19 before your operation?

You will be given details about having a COVID-19 screening test approximately 72 hours before your operation. The hospital will subsequently contact you with the result of your test prior to your operation.

If the test is negative and you remain well, you will be advised when to attend the hospital for your operation.

If the test is positive, or either you or a close contact develops symptoms during the 14-day period before surgery, it is likely that your operation will be postponed. You will be offered another date for your operation when it is considered safe.

What you can do to help your recovery?

Where practical we would recommend a further 14 days period of isolation after your surgery to limit the risk of you having COVID-19 immediately after your operation.






About this leaflet:

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www.dchft.nhs.uk

On arrival at the Hospital:

	<p>If possible, please attend your appointment alone. If you need support during your appointment, you can bring a maximum of one family member or Carer. Please do not bring any other relative with you to any appointment.</p>
	<p>Please arrive no earlier than 10 minutes prior to your allocated time slot.</p> <p>Please be on time. If you are running late, contact the Department on 01305 255... before coming to the hospital, as we may have to rearrange your appointment. If you are arriving by patient transport please contact the department for additional any instructions</p>
	<p>Hands should be washed frequently for 20 seconds each time, at home, before coming into the hospital and regularly, as needed, eg after touching your face or using the toilet.</p> <p>Please make use of the hand sanitiser at main and department entrances on arrival and departure at the Trust.</p>
	<p>Please use a cloth covering on attendance at the Trust. Guidance on how to make a cloth covering is available on the Government website (detailed below). If you are not able to bring one with you, please contact the department prior to your appointment. If you are required to remove it, you will be asked to do so by a clinician.</p>
	<p>In order to comply with social distancing rules, to the best of your ability, please keep 2 metres apart from other people wherever possible and follow the signs and directions in the Trust. Where possible, please keep to the LEFT in corridors.</p> <p>Should any diagnostic tests be required eg blood tests, you might not be able to wait for these as before and may need to return to the hospital on a future occasion to have them done</p>

What should you do now?

If you are not certain about proceeding with your operation during the COVID-19 pandemic, you may choose to defer your surgery, and request a later date for your operation. If you require further information you may speak to your clinical team.

If you are keen to have your operation you should complete and sign the additional form below – ‘INFORMED CONSENT DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC’ and bring this with you on the day of your operation.

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INFORMED CONSENT DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

PLEASE BRING THIS PAGE WITH YOU ON THE DAY OF SURGERY

In signing this document you are agreeing to the following statements:

I have read and understood the information leaflet provided

I (and my household) have adhered strictly to 14 days of isolation

I (and my household) have **NOT** had symptoms suggestive of COVID infection in the last 14 days

I understand that if I develop COVID infection around the time of my surgery there is a significant risk to my life

I have weighed up the risks and benefits and have decided that I would like to undergo surgery

NOTE: If you are not able to comply with any of the above conditions please contact the admissions team on 01305 255779.

We will refer you to your clinical team and may have to defer your surgery until national guidance changes.

Signature of Patient:

Date:

Patient Addressogram:

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