



## Advice for patients attending hospital for elective surgery/procedures during coronavirus (Covid-19)

### Why are you receiving this leaflet?

You are receiving this information because you have been listed for a procedure. Along with the risks associated with surgery, there is a small chance that you will get a COVID infection if you come to hospital, or you may be carrying it with you when you come in (prior to symptoms). There is some evidence that if you contract COVID around the time of surgery, there is a significant chance of it having an impact on your recovery from surgery, with an increased chance of an intensive care admission. National guidance has recently changed and, despite the low incidence of COVID in Dorset, we still need to work together with you to make your procedure as safe as possible.

### What is the guidance you need to follow to reduce your risk of COVID exposure prior to your procedure?

You will need to minimise your risk of exposure to COVID in the 10 days prior to surgery **by following government guidance on social distancing. This means that:**

- You can go to work, but must maintain strict social distancing. Where this is not possible, wear a face mask
- You should avoid public transport or taxis where possible (you can still attend hospital appointments)
- You should avoid crowded places and contact with people outside your social bubble
- You should wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser
- You should avoid smoking and limit your alcohol intake to help assure you are in the best possible shape for your operation and to aid in your recovery
- You **MUST NOT** travel to parts of the country (or abroad where allowed) where there is a high incidence of COVID, or which are subject to a government-enforced quarantine upon arrival back in the UK.

**The following is what we are expecting from you during your isolation period (72 hours before your procedure) after your pre-operative COVID swab:**

- Do **not** go to work, school or public areas, and avoid public transport or taxis, although you may still need to attend hospital visits
- Stay away from other members of the household as much as possible
- You should not go out even to buy food or other essentials, and any exercise should be taken within your home
- Minimise as much as possible 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
- Please keep doing daily exercise within your house. Look for ideas of exercises you can do at home on the NHS website ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk))

Your clinical team may identify you as high risk if you should contract COVID and may recommend 10 days of isolation for you and your family within your household prior to surgery.

Please report any of the following symptoms that **either you or members of your household** have during this 10-day period. If any of the following apply, we will arrange an urgent swab to check for COVID-19:

- Temperature or fever (above 37.8°C)
- Loss of/or change in sense of smell and/or taste
- New persistent cough
- Fever/sweats/fatigue
- Any contact with a COVID-positive person in the last 10 days

As part of your preoperative care you will need to have a COVID-19 swab at the hospital approximately 72 hours prior to surgery via our drive-in testing hub.

Should you test positive, or develop symptoms during the 10-day period up to your surgery, it is highly likely that your operation will be postponed.

This will not mean that you return to the bottom of the waiting list, simply we will offer a later date to operate on you when it is safer to do so.

**About this leaflet:**

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During your stay in hospital, you will be advised about safe visiting by friends and family. This will be in accordance with national guidance.

Staff wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment in accordance with national guidance. All staff report symptoms that may be suggestive of COVID-19 infection in themselves or their families. They are being rapidly tested, and whilst the results are pending, they are **NOT** at work.

The hospital undertakes enhanced cleaning procedures, taking into account the ways in which we know the virus can spread.




Where practical, upon discharge we would recommend a further 10-day period of isolation after your surgery.

In order to reduce contact, you may receive consultations by phone or online video calls rather than face-to-face consultations.

### Further information

This guidance is in line with national guidance from NICE. At any point during this process you may choose to defer your surgery, but whilst you would not be placed at the bottom of a waiting list, it may take longer to reappoint you than it would have done prior to COVID-19. Please do not hesitate to contact your clinical team if you have any further questions.

### On arrival at the hospital



	If possible, please attend your appointment <b>alone</b> . 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.
	<b>Please be on time</b> for your appointment but arrive <b>no earlier</b> than 10 minutes prior to your allocated time. If you are running late please contact the department 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 any additional instructions.
	Hands should be washed frequently for 20 seconds each time, at home, before coming into the hospital and as needed – for example after touching your face or using the toilet.  Please make use of the hand sanitiser at main and department entrances. Further information on hand hygiene is available <a href="#">on our website</a> .

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	<p>Please use a face covering on attendance to the Trust, unless you are <a href="#">exempt due to an age, health or disability reason</a>. Face coverings will be available from dispensers at all Trust entrances. 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 your distance from other people wherever possible and follow the signs and directions in the Trust. <b>Please keep to the LEFT in corridors.</b></p> <p>Should any diagnostic tests be required such as 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.**

**Useful websites:** <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

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# Informed Consent During Covid-19 Pandemic

**Please bring this page with you on the day of your 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 3 days of isolation

I (and my household) have **NOT** had symptoms suggestive of COVID infection in the last 10 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: .....

Patient Label:

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