

# **Pre-operative information on COVID-19**

**Protocol as from 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

**The risks and benefits**

**Preparing for your procedure**

**Information about comprehensive social-distancing and self-isolating**

**Your operation and after operation**

Your requirements:

- Day 14 to day 3 before your procedure follow comprehensive social distancing measures
- Day 3 to the day of your procedure you and your household follow self-isolation measures
- Access COVID swabbing facilities in our drive through facility within 72 hrs of your procedure

# Understanding the risks and benefits during COVID-19

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## Since the COVID outbreak the risks of undergoing procedures has increased.

In addition to the usual risks and benefits of a procedure, it is important that you understand the specific risks associated with COVID and that you also need to take certain precautions as recommended by your medical team.

### The risks

- Safety is our priority; we will listen to your concerns and discuss them with you

We must make you aware that:

- Your assessment and care may be disrupted, delayed or performed differently during the pandemic.

Coming to hospital might increase your chances of contracting Covid-19, or you may already be carrying it when you come for your operation.

- Covid-19 infection will make your recovery more difficult, or increase your risk of serious illness, or death.

- If you suffer from certain chronic medical conditions, it may be considered unsafe to proceed with your elective surgery, and a clinical decision may be made to defer your surgery until a more safe time.

### The precautions we are taking

Our normal elective surgical pathways have changed, for instance:

- Consultations with doctors and nurses may be undertaken electronically in a video consultation or via telephone.
- We may also ask you to email or post medical information to us.
- You will require testing for coronavirus within 72 hrs of your operation.
- The environment in our hospital has been redesigned to support compliance with social distancing and infection prevention
- We are running a 24/7 cleaning schedule with particular attention to high traffic area
- Your operation will be cancelled if you test positive or break isolation rules

# Preparing for your procedure at Northampton General Hospital

## Comprehensive social-distancing

For **14 days** before your admission

### Do not:

- use public transport or taxis
- go to pubs, restaurants or any closed area gathering
- meet others outside your household, even friends or family
- touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

### Do:

- wear a face covering at all time when leaving home
- wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser
- stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times if you go out
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- cancel all routine medical and dental appointments
- work from home if possible. If not possible a risk assessment should be done to assess the risk at work

If you or a member of your household becomes symptomatic (flu like symptoms, cough, fever, sore throat, muscle aches, loss of sense of smell) at any time you should inform us.

## Self-isolation – you and your household

For **3 days** before your admission

### Do not:

- go to work, school, or public areas. If family members need to go out to work/school consider alternative accommodation for them during these 3 days. If that is not possible isolate yourself, or them, in their rooms
- use public transport or taxis
- go out even to buy food or other essentials
- invite or allow social visitors, such as other friends and family, to enter your home

### Do:

- ensure you and all household members remain at home
- ensure any exercise is taken within your home
- ask friends or relatives to shop, pick up medication, walk your dog, etc. Make sure all deliveries are left outside for your collection
- stay in contact with people, use the phone or social media

Seek prompt medical attention if your illness or the illness in any household members is worsening. If it's not an emergency, contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. If it is an emergency and you need to call an ambulance, dial 999 and inform the call handler or operator that you or your relative have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms.

# Your operation and after operation

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## COVID Swab within 72 hrs

- You will require testing for coronavirus, 2-3 days before your operation.
- Our pre-operative service will contact you to make this arrangement and inform you how to access the service whilst remaining compliant with the self-isolation requirements.

## Your operation

- At any time, if you wish you can choose not to go ahead with your operation.
- Your operation may not take place at Northampton General Hospital. It may be at another location such as the BMI Three Shires Hospital, or Daventry for example.
- There may be transfer of some of your records to other local hospitals, but these will be treated with strict confidentiality.
- Circumstances will be very different in the hospital; wards/rooms will be reorganised and staff will be wearing protective equipment.
- You may not meet your surgeon until the day of treatment. You may have treatment by another member of the team who has the training/skills to perform the surgery.

- You will not be able to have your family and friends visit whilst in hospital.

## After your operation

- You will be discharged from hospital when you are medically fit.
- We will initially check on your recovery by telephone.
- Follow-up care may again be via an electronic video consultation, telephone or if indicated a face to face consultation.
- It is important to continue to follow the comprehensive social distancing measures described above for a period of up to 14 days following your operation.

There are still significant risks for you if you catch COVID in the post-operative period if you have had major surgery. This will be discussed with you by your treating consultant.