

## Aortic Valve Replacement

### Introduction

The Covid 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 are able to support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance has been written by clinicians who are responsible for your care.

Please read the following information in conjunction with the staying healthy guidance appropriate for your condition.

### Guidance for Patients

A patient that undergoes aortic valve replacement follows one of two pathways:

- 1) Elective or planned surgery: following review of stable patients with aortic valve disease, patients are placed on the waiting list and are brought in for their procedure once they reach the top of the list.
- 2) Urgent/emergency surgery: patients with unstable aortic valve disease present to the emergency department and are kept in hospital for their surgery.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic elective patients would be operated on in less than 12 weeks. Depending on the severity of the valve disease, some elective patients would be prioritised and admitted sooner if they had severe disease.

For periods of the pandemic (mainly 2020), no elective patients were operated on. We have now restarted operating on elective/planned patients, but because of the increase in the waiting lists during this time, patients often have had to wait longer for a procedure date.

Throughout the pandemic we have continued to operate on urgent/emergency patients that needed to be admitted to hospital.

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

If you are experiencing worsening of your symptoms while on the waiting list (e.g. worsening breathlessness or chest pains), you should contact your GP or call the cardiothoracic secretaries. Your case will be reviewed, and a decision made as to whether you should have surgery earlier than your planned date.

## My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

If you experience blackouts or dizzy spells, you should attend the emergency department immediately. Depending on your circumstances and the severity of symptoms, this may require an ambulance to transport you to hospital.

### Contact Us

Medical secretary team: 02476 965678 or 02476 965675