

## Gastroenterology and Colorectal – Colonoscopy

### 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 are able to support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance has been written with Clinicians who are responsible for your care.

### Guidance for Patients

Follow this link for information about your procedure: <https://www.nbt.nhs.uk/our-services/a-z-services/endoscopy/endoscopy-patient-information>

Appointments are triaged based on our understanding of clinical urgency.

Continue to take your medication while waiting for your procedure, as directed by your GP and hospital specialist. The Endoscopy team will advise you on which medications you must stop prior to your procedure.

If you cannot attend your appointment at the time you've been given, contact the hospital or clinic to rearrange it. It may help to have your NHS number with you when you contact them.

Allow plenty of time for your visit. You may have to wait if other appointments over-run or there is a staffing emergency.

Please be aware that at this appointment you may not have all your questions answered and further tests or diagnostics may be scheduled as a result of your visit. Please do not be concerned, this is an important part of the pathway for each patient.

Whilst you are waiting for your procedure, stay as active as you can. Consider what you can do to improve your health before the operation. Stopping smoking, reducing alcohol consumption, eating more healthily and exercising have all been shown to help patients recover more quickly after surgery. Ask your GP practice about lifestyle support available to you.

We recommend that you ensure that your vaccinations are up to date, particularly for COVID-19 and seasonal influenza. Vaccine guidance is available from your GP and the NHS webpage "NHS vaccinations and when to have them".

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

If your symptoms are worsening, please contact your GP.

### Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it is not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit <https://www.nhs.uk/>. The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

# My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

## Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening dial 999: see the webpage <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care-services/when-to-call-999/>.

## Contact Us

Your last letter from clinic has our contact details.