

Introduction – outpatient appointment

Maintaining your overall health whilst you are waiting for your outpatient appointment is important. This document provides you with information on how you can support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital. There are several ways you can do this and the information we have provided will help you. We recommend you read through this information and use it to the best of your ability.

Take Your Medication

Keeping in control of your pain is very important as this can have a big effect on your sleep, mood, and stress levels. We therefore encourage you to take your medication as prescribed. If you are unsure as to whether you are taking the right amount, or are experiencing unpleasant side effects from your medication, we suggest you speak to your GP. For more information on medication, see the link below.

<https://www.versusarthritis.org/about-arthritis/treatments/drugs/painkillers-and-nsaids/>

Keep Moving

It is important to keep moving, even if it causes you pain and discomfort. Find a good balance between rest and physical activity through the day to prevent you from stiffening up too much. Although sometimes it can feel like the exercises are not helping, they can often prevent your pain from getting worse. The links below provide more guidance about getting moving:

<https://weareundefeatable.co.uk/>

Supporting people with a range of long-term health conditions to find ways to be active that works for them.

<https://www.versusarthritis.org/about-arthritis/exercising-with-arthritis/lets-move-with-leon/>

A 12-week programme of 30-minute movement sessions provided by a fitness expert to improve whole body strength, flexibility, and cardiovascular fitness.

Improve Your Health

Being as healthy as possible is so important when you have your procedure. This will have a direct impact on the success of your procedure and your recovery afterwards. Keeping your alcohol intake low, stopping smoking, managing your weight, and keeping moving within the limits of your pain are all good ways to improve your health. The NHS provides some great advice here <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/>

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

Good Mental Health

Mental wellbeing is just as important as physical wellbeing. Having a persistent pain problem can provoke symptoms of anxiety, low mood and uncertainty and it can sometimes feel that things will never be better. Staying connected with friends and family is important during this time, as is pacing your activity, doing things that give you pleasure and finding time to relax. Every Mind Matters provides some useful tips too.

<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/>

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

If you feel that your condition is worsening, or you have developed further symptoms please contact your GP in the first instance and they will either be able to support you or inform your consultant about your condition if they feel that this is appropriate.

If you are unable to speak to your GP, please call 111 for advice or visit <https://111.nhs.uk/>

For something life threatening e.g., severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.