

First Outpatient Appointment – Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Service

Introduction

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare services nationally were impacted in the way in which they provided treatment, including routine elective services. As such patients may have to wait longer than we all would wish.

The following guidance has been certified by clinicians who are responsible for your care and should aid you as you wait to attend the hospital. This summarises for you information about the service, as well as offering information on how you can support yourself while waiting to attend your outpatient appointment.

About the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Service

Oral and maxillofacial surgery is the surgical specialty concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases affecting the mouth, jaws, face and neck. It includes the diagnosis and management of facial injuries, head and neck cancers, salivary gland diseases, facial disproportion, facial pain, temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorders, impacted teeth, cysts and tumours of the jaws, as well as numerous problems affecting the oral mucosa such as mouth ulcers and infections.

Responding to changes in your condition

You can look up your condition at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/> for an overview of what you can expect or should look out for.

It is possible that your condition may change. If you think things are getting worse, or that the medicine prescribed to you has either stopped working or is no longer working as intended, you should contact your GP as soon as possible. They may wish to review you and can contact the Trust for advice and guidance from the Trust's specialist team.

If your condition worsens suddenly, you can dial NHS 111 or go to <https://111.nhs.uk/> if you believe the situation is not an emergency.

NHS 111 staff can guide you where to get help for your symptoms, advise you if you're not sure what to do and tell you how to find general health information and advice. Including where to get an emergency supply of your prescribed medicine and how to get a repeat prescription.

They may also be able to arrange for an appointment at a medical facility near you.

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In the event of an emergency or life-threatening change in condition always head to A&E or dial 999 as appropriate.

General health measures

Your mental and physical condition can also be improved by adopting a healthier lifestyle, which can help speed-up the body's healing process.

Such measures include eating healthily and making sure you have what the body needs, staying active through exercise (where your condition allows), minimising or cutting out alcohol use and stopping smoking.

More information can be found about this in our Trust's My Planned Care profile under General Health Advice.

Attending your appointment

You will receive a communication about your appointment by letter and or text message.

Make sure you check the date, time and location of your appointment carefully.

If you are uncertain about when to come in and where to go, please telephone the contact number on your letter or use the text message link.

What you should bring to your appointment

Please read your appointment letter very carefully as it may ask you to bring certain items with you or ask you to visit another department for tests before your clinic appointment.

Please remember to bring:

- Your appointment letter and any other information that we may have sent to you
- Any medicines or inhalers that you are taking presently
- Any samples requested by your doctor or nurse
- Information about any change in your personal details, for example, if you have a new address or a new GP
- Proof of entitlement to free prescriptions
- A small amount of money in case you need to buy a drink or snack

If you require additional assistance

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We aim to respect your privacy, dignity and religious and cultural beliefs at all times during your visit. Please call the number on your appointment letter if you have any special needs, such as if you need an interpreter or signer and this was not booked at the time your appointment was originally scheduled. An interpreter can then be arranged to help you at your appointment.

Phone or virtual consultations

In the event your appointment is either a phone or virtual (online via video conferencing software) consultation, you should follow the instructions given in the message.

Make sure you are available, ready and prepared in a room or area that you will be comfortable in and will have privacy, as you will be discussing your clinical situation with your healthcare professional. If you are due to have a video call instead of a face-to-face appointment you will be given a link in advance via either text or email to join your clinician at the appropriate time.

If you cannot attend your appointment

We understand that you may not be able to attend an appointment we have arranged for you.

Whether you are unable to attend due to other commitments, are ill, your condition has improved, or you have decided not to proceed with your treatment for a personal reason, you can either cancel or reschedule your appointment at any time. Please refer to the number on your appointment letter.

It is very important you let us know if you cannot attend. This allows us to rearrange things for you promptly and see if another person requiring treatment can use the vacant appointment slot. We may even contact you after your appointment date is given should a free slot become available at an earlier time.

If you do not tell us that you cannot make the appointment, you will be marked as having not attended and this may result in significant delays to your appointment, or even your case being closed.

Contact details

Should you require any further details about your outpatient appointment call either the number on your letter or contact Medical Secretaries: 01922 721172, extension 3801 & 6971

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