

ENT Surgery – Tonsillectomy

Introduction

This document is for people who have been seen and assessed by the ENT team in Herefordshire as needing a tonsillectomy. You will have already been seen by a doctor and your name added to the waiting list.

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on NHS 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 assist yourself while waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance has been written by the clinicians who are responsible for your care.

Guidance for Patients

Tonsillectomy is usually performed for recurrent sore throats, because of obstructed breathing (sleep apnoea) or because there is a concern regarding cancer.

- If there is a concern regarding cancer, your surgery will be performed urgently (within two to three weeks) and you are therefore unlikely to need to refer to this guidance document. Please contact the department if you do not have a date for your surgery.
- If you are waiting for a tonsillectomy because of recurrent tonsillitis and you develop a sore throat whilst awaiting your tonsillectomy, you should take painkillers (Paracetamol +/- Ibuprofen) and plenty of cold fluids. A soothing throat spray such as Diffiam™ can be purchased over the counter at most pharmacies and can also help reduce pain and swelling. If you cannot swallow fluids you should contact your GP or NHS 111.
- If you are awaiting surgery because of obstructed breathing (sleep apnoea) and you feel these symptoms are worsening, then please contact the ENT or Sleep departments urgently at Hereford Hospital for further guidance.

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

Urgent Health Advice

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

Life Threatening Emergencies

The contents of this information has been reviewed and approved by the Deputy Medical Director for Wye Valley Hospital on 14th April 2022

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

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

GP surgeries are still open

If you experience an increase in pain, you should in the first instance contact your General Practitioner for review and advice.

GP surgeries are still open and are working differently to how they did before the COVID-19 pandemic. GP practices continue to make best use of telephone, online and video consultations. Face-to-face appointments are still being given to those who need it.

When you phone or use an online form to contact your GP surgery to make an appointment, you will be asked some questions which are designed to help staff guide you to the most appropriate clinical person to help you with your condition. This could be a nurse, clinical pharmacist, physician's associate, GP or paramedic.