

What happens next – explaining the diagnosis

Colorectal Department



Patient information leaflet

Information about your Key Worker

This booklet has been given to you by your doctor or colorectal nurse specialist, as you have been told that there is an area of concern within your large bowel. It may be necessary for further investigations to be arranged, if this is the case these will be discussed with you. We recognise this is a worrying time for you and your family/carers.

The colorectal specialist nursing team is:

Angela Bates, Amy Twigger and Claire Richardson

The colorectal specialist nurse you saw today is:

She will be your “key worker” responsible for co-ordinating your care, however any of the colorectal specialist nurses will be happy to help you at any time.

You can contact the colorectal specialist nurses for further information or advice.

Telephone: 01483 406729 (Monday to Friday 08.30am to 5.00pm)

Please leave a message on our answer phone if we are not able to answer the phone.

A colorectal specialist nurse has undergone specialist training and is available to offer advice and support to you and your family/carers throughout your treatment.

Please contact them if you have any questions or worries, or if you would just like to talk.

Your feelings

We recognise that waiting for test results can be a worrying time and the following information may be of some use.

- Bring a friend or family member to your appointments – they can help you to remember what is said and can help you to remember to ask any questions you have.
- Bring this booklet with you, and use it to make notes. Maybe write down questions in the booklet as you think of them, that way you will remember to ask them in clinic.

Talking about your feelings to the doctors and nurses looking after you can often help to clarify your own thoughts, and this also gives them an opportunity to understand how you are feeling.

What investigations might I need?

To help find a cause for your symptoms and to determine any possible spread of the cancer, you may have some of the following investigations:

Colonoscopy

A colonoscopy examines the whole colon and will necessitate you being admitted to the hospital for the day.

If your doctor requests this examination, a separate leaflet will be available.

Ultra-sound Scan (USS)

This test is done in the Scanning department of the hospital. In this test soundwaves build up a picture of organs such as the liver.

A gel is spread on your abdomen and an instrument which produces sound waves is passed over the area. A computer converts these waves into a picture and can detect the presence of any abnormalities and provides information about size and position.

It is a painless procedure which only takes a few minutes.

CT Scan (Computerised Tomography)

A CT scan takes a series of x-rays, which build up a 3D picture of the inside of your body.

The scan is painless and only takes from 10 to 30 minutes to complete.

If you need to have this examination more detailed information will be sent to you with your appointment.

MRI Scan (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)

This scan is similar to a CT, but uses magnetism instead of x-rays to create the images and looks at soft tissue, muscles, nerves and bones etc.

It gives very detailed pictures which can help to decide the initial staging of the cancer and provides useful information in planning treatments.

If you need to have this examination, more detailed information will be sent to you with your MRI scan appointment.

PET Scan (Positron Emission Tomography)

This scan shows us how the tissues are functioning and identifies the organs or tissues that are not working normally.

If you need to have this examination more detailed information will be sent to you with your appointment.

Other tests

Prior to your operation, and in addition to these tests, you may also have other investigations including blood tests, chest x-ray and an ECG (heart tracing).

What happens when a diagnosis is made?

In line with the National Guidelines all patients are discussed by the Colorectal Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT).

This team consists of:

- Colorectal Surgeons
- Oncologists
- Radiologists
- Pathologist
- Gastroenterologists

This meeting allows input from all relevant specialists, so that the best possible treatment plan can be agreed.

Our MDT meeting is held weekly, and each patient is discussed before treatment with their staging results, and following treatment with their histopathology result.

Patients in follow-up may also be discussed if indicated.

As part of the MDT process each patient is allocated a key worker, whose role is to co-ordinate care and promote continuity, mainly by being available as a point of contact for information and advice.

Your Key Worker's contact details are on the inside cover of this booklet.

What treatments are there?

A treatment plan will be agreed at the Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting and will be discussed with you by your consultant.

You will be contacted as soon as possible with an appointment to come and discuss your results with your Doctor or specialist nurse.

Any alternative treatments will also be discussed, and you will have as many opportunities to discuss your diagnosis and treatment as you require.

The Specialist Nurse is always available to provide any further information or support that you may need.

When do I get the results of my test?

Once all your scans and histopathology results have been discussed at the MDT, an appointment will be arranged for you. This out patient appointment will allow all your results to be discussed and explained to you and your treatment plan will be outlined to you.

If surgery is required, it may be necessary for you to attend pre-assessment that same day. This assessment will establish if we have all the necessary information to determine your fitness for surgery and to ensure the best possible recovery for you. It is also an opportunity for you to tell us all about your individual needs and circumstances. All of this may take a few hours therefore you may expect to be in the hospital for this length of time.

Contact details and information

Colorectal Nurse Specialists

01483 571122 ext 4363 or direct line 01483 406729

Consultant Colorectal Surgeons

Mr J Stebbing 01483 464195

Prof T Rockall 01483 402769

Mr I Jourdan 01483 464094

Mr A Scala 01483 464196

Consultant Oncologists

Dr A Stewart 01483 571122 ext 2556

Dr Dhillon 01483 571122 ext 6874

Admissions Department 01483 464007

Pre-Assessment 01483 571122 ext 4628

Outpatients 01483 464002

Contact details

For further information or advice, please contact the Colorectal Nurse Specialists.

Email: rsc-tr.ColorectalCNS@nhs.net

Telephone: 01483 406729 (Monday–Friday, 8.30am–5.00pm)

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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