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**Surgical treatment during the Covid-19 pandemic**

Like all hospitals we are working hard to tackle the impact of the Covid-19 virus.

Due to the increased health and safety risk caused by the Covid-19 virus, we need to take some extra precautions to safeguard patients and staff and ensure the best patient care.

Your specialist has recommended that your treatment includes surgery. It is important that you follow the advice below to make sure your treatment is as safe and effective as possible.

Planning for your surgery:

Before your surgery, your clinical team will explain the new procedures we have put in place to ensure your safety, and to safeguard our staff, during the pandemic. The clinical team will also address any concerns you may have and answer your questions. **You will only be able to have surgery if your Covid-19 test proves negative; have completed 14 days of comprehensive social-distancing and hand-hygiene measures running up to the day of your surgery; and you display no Covid-19 symptoms**. Not only is this is important to ensure that you have the best outcome from your surgery, but to protect you, other patients, and our staff. Some patients, who are at greater risk of getting COVID-19 or having a poorer outcome if they get it, may be advised to self-isolate for 14 days before a procedure.

**Before your surgery:**

1. You will be asked to agree to being tested for Covid-19 and to follow the comprehensive social-distancing and hand-hygiene measures for 14 days.
2. Please see the GOV UK website for advice on social distancing: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing-after-4-july>
3. Your hospital team will make arrangements for you to have a Covid-19 test 48 hours before the day of your surgery and this may also include a chest X-ray or scan if they consider it appropriate.
4. Whenever you come to the hospital you must wear a face covering. This can be a handmade one – see our Facebook page for a simple guide on making a mask <https://www.facebook.com/salisburydistricthospital/>

If you experience Covid-19 symptoms during your comprehensive social distancing period you should inform your clinical team and follow government guidance: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>

**Recovering after your surgery:**

Your clinical team will tell you how best to look after yourself when you are discharged home after surgery. They will also talk through any concerns you may have and answer your questions.

Additional Information:

**NHS Volunteer Responders**

During the time you are self-isolating at home you can access the NHS Volunteer Responders if you need help with shopping, a prescription collected or a friendly chat. Please call 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm) to arrange volunteer support. Have a look at the NHS Volunteer Responder website for more information: <https://volunteering.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/nhs-volunteer-responders-portal/isolating>

**Items to bring with you to hospital**

In addition to the usual items you might bring with you to hospital, don’t forget to bring your mobile phone/tablet and charger (if you have one) so that you can stay in touch with your loved ones.

**Visiting**

We currently have strict visiting restrictions – these are subject to change and so please ask your clinical team for more information on the specifics.

If you have any concerns or questions about how to prepare for your surgery, please contact a member of your hospital team who will be able to help you.

**Drop off point for essential items**

Whilst visiting is restricted your loved ones can drop-off any essential items you may need. Items can be left in PALS from Monday - Friday between 10-11am and 2-3pm. A free short stay car parking space is available for your loved ones outside PALS. To arrange a drop-off please call 01722 429044 or email sft.PALS@nhs.net

**Keeping in touch when visiting is restricted**

All our wards have access to IPads so can set-up and support video calls to your family members if you not have your own (or do not bring yours with you to hospital).

If your loved ones want to keep in touch they can send messages and photos by email to our PALS team at: sft.messagetoalovedone@nhs.net. Messages can also be phoned through to the team (Monday to Friday) on **07393 267852**.

Messages are printed out, stuck onto a card and delivered to the wards every day.

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