

Patient information factsheet

Your appointment at the difficult asthma clinic

You have been given an appointment at the difficult asthma clinic.

Difficult asthma is a term used to describe asthma which is not under control for a number of reasons. This factsheet explains what to expect from your upcoming appointment.

Where to find us

The clinic is based within the medical outpatients department on D level, West Wing, Southampton General Hospital.

How long will the appointment take?

If this is your first appointment at this clinic, allow three to four hours for your appointment. If you have been seen before and are attending for follow-up please allow up to an hour-and-a-half for your appointment.

What we do

We see patients from around the Wessex region who are having significant difficulties with their asthma. We are a multi-disciplinary team made up of doctors, nurse specialists, psychologists and physiotherapists, who appreciate that many asthmatic patients' breathing difficulties are not straightforward. Our aim is to look at the individual nature of your asthma and breathing difficulties and help to improve your symptoms.

Tests

To help us to do this, the doctor may ask for a number of different tests. You may have had some of these tests before. We do try to avoid unnecessary repetition, but sometimes repeating a test is helpful.

The range of tests may include (not every patient will require every test):

- detailed lung function ('breathing') tests
- blood tests
- health/symptom questionnaires (on asthma and related problems)
- inhaler reviews
- allergy skin prick tests. **Please note if you are taking antihistamines or tricyclic antidepressants such as amitriptyline we may contact you and ask you to stop these three to seven days before your appointment.**
- a chest x-ray

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Research

We work closely with clinical research staff and you may be invited to take part in research. You do not have to and whether you take part or not will not affect the care you receive in the clinic.

We are currently enrolling some of our patients in an observational study called 'WATCH' (a separate information sheet may be enclosed). This study will allow us to gather anonymous information from patients living with asthma at various degrees of severity, to help guide and improve treatment for patients in the future. We would be grateful if you would consider taking part, although this is completely voluntary.

For further information or to cancel or change your appointment

If you require any further information about your appointment, wish to cancel or re-book an appointment or need to update your contact details, please contact the secretaries between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday on:

Dr Kurukulaaratchy's or Dr Wilkinson's clinic: **023 8120 8790**

Professor Howarth's clinic: **023 8120 6480**

Dr Dennison's clinic: **023 8120 6056**

If you are calling outside of these hours, on a weekend or bank holiday, you can leave a message on the answer phone. We will return your call the next working day.

We look forward to seeing you in the difficult asthma clinic.

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8120 4688 for help.