

Patient information factsheet

Preparing for your elective operation during the COVID-19 outbreak

Channel Islands patients

We have given you this factsheet because you are booked in for an elective or planned operation at University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust (UHS) during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. It includes important information about how to prepare, so please keep it in a safe place.

You must self-isolate at home

Before your operation, it is very important that you self-isolate at home for **3 days**. This is to make sure that you do not accidentally bring an infection into the hospital.

Testing for COVID-19 before travelling to the mainland

Once you have an admission date, it is your responsibility to arrange with your local NHS to get tested, **3 days** before admission at UHS, for COVID-19 using throat and nose swab tests. You must inform your admitting UHS clinical team of your test result before travelling to the UK mainland. **You must also check that you do not have any of the symptoms below 24 to 48 hours before you are due to fly to the UK mainland:**

- a new cough
- fatigue
- sudden loss of taste or smell
- high temperature
- diarrhoea and vomiting
- new onset joint pains.

If you do have symptoms or if the swab tests are positive, we may have to delay your operation. Please liaise with your UHS clinical team should this be the case.

How to self-isolate at home before your operation

- Stay in your home for the 3 days leading up to your date of admission. If this is not possible for any reason (other than travelling to the UK mainland), you are required to inform your UHS clinical team at the earliest opportunity.
- If you live with other people, sleep in your own separate room if possible and don't share bathroom or kitchen facilities. If this isn't possible, make sure everyone wipes down items like sinks and toilets with cleaning spray containing alcohol or cleansing wipes after using them.
- Everyone should wash their hands regularly, especially before entering and leaving shared spaces. Hand washing should last at least 20 seconds (two verses of the 'happy birthday' song). Make sure you include your thumbs, between your fingers, your nails and your wrists.
- If you are not able to self-isolate in your own room(s), everyone else in the household should isolate with you and not leave the house, unless absolutely necessary.

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- Wherever possible, make arrangements so that you do not need to make trips out of the house for food, medicines and other supplies during your self-isolation period.
- If you need to have deliveries during your 3 day self-isolation, these deliveries should be left on your doorstep, with everyone observing strict handwashing measures and social distancing measures of two metres.
- If you need to go outside, wear a face covering or mask and disposable gloves if possible. While you are out, use alcohol gel regularly and wash your hands with soap and water as soon as you get home.

Travelling to the mainland

Depending on the kind of operation you are having, you may not be able to drive yourself to the airport. In this case, another member of your household who has been self-isolating with you should drive and you should sit as far away as possible in the back of the car and wear a face covering or mask during the journey.

If there is no one you have been self-isolating with who can drive you, someone outside your household, such as another family member or friend can take you to the airport. In this case, the driver must have none of the symptoms listed over the page in the 14 days before the day of the operation. Do not greet this person by hugging or shaking hands. Sit as far away from them as possible in the back of the car and wear a face covering or mask during the journey. The driver should also wear a face covering or mask at all times during the journey.

Wherever possible, avoid using a taxi as it is difficult to be confident that the driver has had no possible coronavirus symptoms in the past 14 days. Please follow all Government guidance with regards to air travel.

On the day of your operation

Personal hygiene

Please have a shower or bath and wear clean, newly-washed clothes if possible when you come into hospital for your operation. You will also need to wear a clean face covering or mask when you come into hospital. Face masks are provided at the hospital entrance.

Contact us

If you have any questions about this advice, please contact our PALS (patient advice and liaison service) team on telephone: **023 8120 6325** or use the contact numbers on your operation appointment letter.

Useful links

NHS website - Check if you have coronavirus symptoms

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/

HM Government website - Coronavirus guidance and support

www.gov.uk/coronavirus

For a translation of this document, or a version in another format such as easy read, large print, Braille or audio, please telephone **023 8120 4688**.

For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalneeds