

## Patient information factsheet

# Surgical pre-assessment clinic Observations appointment

We have given you this factsheet because your doctor has recommended surgery as a treatment option for you. Before you have surgery, we will invite you to attend two appointments as part of our surgical pre-assessment: an observations appointment and a nurse-led appointment.

This factsheet explains what will happen at your observations appointment, so you know what to expect. We hope it helps to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact us using the details at the end of this factsheet.

### What is an observations appointment?

An observations appointment is one part of your surgical pre-assessment. This appointment helps us to prepare you safely for your surgery and identify any areas where we can help to improve your general health before your surgery.

### How should I prepare for this appointment?

On the day of your appointment, you should:

- eat and drink as normal
- take your medications as normal
- bring a list of the medications you are currently taking with you

You can bring a maximum of one person with you to this appointment.

### Who will I be seen by?

You will be seen by a healthcare assistant.

### What will happen at the appointment?

At the appointment, we will measure your:

- height and weight
- blood pressure
- oxygen saturation levels

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We may also perform the following tests:

- **an electrocardiogram (ECG)** - A test that records the electrical activity of your heart, including the rate and rhythm.
- **an MRSA swab test** - A routine test for people who are due to have surgery. It involves wiping swabs (like cotton buds) on the inside of your nostril and around your groin area to check for MRSA. MRSA is a type of bacteria that usually lives harmlessly on the skin, but if it gets inside the body, it can cause a serious infection that needs immediate treatment with antibiotics. If the result shows you have MRSA on your skin, you will need to treat it with a special nasal cream or spray, body wash and shampoo for around 5 to 10 days. If this is the case, we will give you more information along with instructions on how to use the treatments.
- **a rectal swab test** – A painless test that involves inserting a cotton swab into your back passage (rectum) to see if you are a carrier of a certain infection. We will only perform this test if you have stayed in a different hospital within the last 12 months. If you need to have this test, we will give you more information about it at your appointment.
- **blood tests** – We may carry out some routine blood tests. These blood tests can usually be done by one of our healthcare assistants in the pre-assessment clinic. However, occasionally, some people may need to visit the hospital's phlebotomy department instead to have these tests.

We will give you a bag containing the following:

- important information if any of your usual medications need to be stopped before your surgery
- an antimicrobial body wash with instructions on how to use this
- admission details for the day of your surgery
- additional information related to your surgery

We will also be able to answer any questions you may have.

## How long will the appointment be?

Please allow up to one hour for the observations appointment.

## What will happen after the appointment?

After the appointment, we will let you know when you are able to leave the department and resume your normal daily activities.

## Further information

If you have a medical condition that means you need help getting to hospital, please contact your GP surgery so they can arrange transportation for you.

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns before your appointment, please contact us.

Surgical pre-assessment clinic

Telephone: **023 8120 2567** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm)

Email: [preassessrequests@uhs.nhs.uk](mailto:preassessrequests@uhs.nhs.uk)

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## Useful links

[www.uhs.nhs.uk/departments/perioperative-care/surgical-pre-assessment](http://www.uhs.nhs.uk/departments/perioperative-care/surgical-pre-assessment)

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/having-surgery/preparation](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/having-surgery/preparation)

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/electrocardiogram](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/electrocardiogram)

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/mrsa](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/mrsa)

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