

Get the best from your healthcare professional at your next appointment



Before your consultation it is often helpful to think about what you want to tell the Doctor, Nurse or Health Care Assistant (HCA). This should mean that when you are speaking to them you remember to tell them everything you are worried about or feel is relevant to help them to help you.



Before your next appointment, think about the following and make some notes to bring along to your appointment, if you think that will be helpful:

- What are you really worried about?
- What symptoms do you want to tell the Doctor/Nurse/HCA about?
- Are you clear what you want from the consultation? Perhaps a diagnosis, treatment, referral or just advice.
- Do you have any beliefs or concerns? For example, are you worried that your symptom may be cancer?
- Do you have any expectations? Do you think the Doctor/Nurse/HCA should prescribe you medication? Or refer you for a specialist opinion?

Be honest, it is important to tell the Doctor/Nurse/HCA the main reason you are there at the start of the consultation. If you are embarrassed, please don't be, they are there to help and won't be shocked.

If you don't feel able to take it all in, you may like to bring someone with you. They don't have to stay for any examination, but may help you remember what the Doctor said.

Written information is often available for a number of problems. If you would like this, please ask.

If you take any medications **not** prescribed by your Doctor, please bring a list of the medications with you.

When Is It The Best To Telephone The Surgery?

The telephone lines are usually very busy each morning until approximately 10am. We suggest you telephone the surgery between 10am - 12.30 or 1.30 - 6pm, and try to avoid the busy part of the morning whenever possible.



Please remember that we have a limited number of telephone lines between 12.30pm - 1.30pm, between these times we only accept calls relating to urgent items .

Who should I see?

We have a team of Doctors, Nurse Practitioners, Practice Nurses and Health Care assistants (HCA).



When you telephone the surgery, you will be asked some basic questions by the Receptionist, in order for you to be seen by the most appropriate clinician.

You can see a **Nurse Practitioner** for:

- Minor illnesses: sore throats; ear, eye, urine, chest and vaginal infections; rashes; childhood illnesses.
- Contraception advice including emergency contraception.
- Management of long term conditions (diabetes, COPD, asthma etc.).

You can see a **Practice Nurse** for:

- Ear syringing,
- Anti-coagulation,
- Cervical smears,
- Family planning advice, including coil checks,
- Dressings,
- Immunisations/travel advice,
- Long term conditions reviews (diabetes, COPD asthma etc.).

You can see a **Health Care Assistant** for:

- Blood tests,
- ECGs,
- Birthday Reviews,
- Blood pressure monitoring,
- Dressings

You can see your usual **GP** for:

- Recent onset, long term and urgent illnesses,
- Mental health issues,
- Complex problems with multiple conditions and medications,
- Minor surgery, joint injections, contraceptive coils and implants.

A **Duty Team** is available for urgent care. If you require urgent (same-day) treatment, the receptionist will book a telephone consultation with the duty team. One of the team will contact you to undertake an assessment and provide the appropriate treatment. Please note this is for **URGENT TREATMENT ONLY**. Please give the Receptionist a reason for requesting the call, as this enables the GP to prioritise calls when required. All calls will receive a call back

Appointments

Please remember that the Doctors' appointments are only **ten minutes long**.

One appointment = one medical problem, patient safety is the key



Ask for a double appointment if you have more than one condition/illness to discuss during your consultation.

GP telephone consultations: this is when a GP will carry out your consultation by telephone and treat you according to the outcome of the consultation - by issuing a prescription, offering reassurance, arranging tests or by making you an appointment to be seen. Please ensure that you are able to talk to the clinician without being overheard when you are called back, just as you would if you had a face to face appointment.

You may find it useful to write down your questions as it is easy to forget once in the consultation. This can avoid coming out of the consultation and remembering something you really wanted to tell them.

Have you got an appointment with a HealthCare Assistant (HCA)?

The HCA's are not medically trained. This means that they cannot diagnose or check rashes, spots, skin problems, swellings and so on. We have noticed an increase in patients who are asking the HCAs to help with these kinds of things. Whilst they are always happy to assist patients, diagnosing conditions is outside of their skills and they cannot help with these requests. If you are worried about these things, please ask for an appointment with a Nurse, Nurse Prescriber or GP.

What Happens During an allocated 10 minute slot?

- The GP pulls up the patients record, and reads an overview of the record,
- He/she calls the patient into the consulting room and greets the patient,
- The GP consults the patient - with examination/tests/issue prescription, as required,
- When the patient leaves the consulting room he/she writes up the notes in the patients record,
- Dictate a referral letter if required

Time constraints: GPs see 6 patients face to face per hour or contact 12 patients per hour for telephone consultations.

Annual Birthday Review

Patients who have conditions such as diabetes, asthma, COPD, hypothyroidism, cardiovascular disease and high blood pressure will have an annual review for all their long term medical problems in the month of their birthday. The aim is to



reduce the number of visits patients have to make to have their long term conditions monitored which will be much more convenient for patients. You will be contacted around the time of your birthday, if this applies to you.

Medications

Sometimes you can come away from a consultation with a prescription and later forget what the Doctor said. It may be also useful to think about questions for the Doctor if you are prescribed medicine, such as:



- What does this medicine do and why is it important that I take it?
- How long do I need to take it for?
- How do I know it is helping?
- What are the likely risks and side effects?
- What should I do if I get a side effect or don't feel well after taking it?
- What happens if I don't take it or stop taking it?

*This leaflet has been composed by the practice and the
TRMC Practice Participation Group.*

Pharmacists are often able to help with queries about your medications.

Questions You May Wish to Ask The Pharmacist:

- When and how should I take my medication?
- Are there any special things I need to do after taking the medication?
For example avoid lying down immediately after taking the medication.
- What other medicines, drinks, foods or activities should I be aware of when I am taking this medication?
- Can I drink alcohol when taking it?
- Can I drive when taking it?
- Is there anything that can help to remind me to take my medicines?
- Can I have containers that are easier to open?
- Can I have the leaflet in the pack in bigger print?
- Would pre-payment for prescription be cheaper for the number of medications I take?
- Do I have a medical condition that means I do not have to pay anything for prescriptions?



A helpful website for patients is www.nhs.uk, for healthy living advice (Live Well) or use the Health A-Z.

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