

Patient information

Your outpatient appointment

This leaflet explains more about how to prepare for your outpatient appointment and what to expect when your appointment takes place. We hope that you find this information useful.

What to do if you cannot attend or do not need your appointment

If it is not possible for you to attend on the date and time stated in your letter it is important to let the appointment team know as soon as possible so that we can see another patient. You will find the contact details at the top of the appointment letter that was sent with this leaflet.

If you booked your appointment through the electronic referral system (eRS) or need assistance in changing or cancelling your appointment, contact the e-Referral Service appointment line weekdays 8am to 8pm or weekends and bank holidays 8am to 4pm (closed on Christmas Day).

Phone: 0345 6088888. Textphone: 0345 8502250. Webpage: <https://www.ebs.ncrs.nhs.uk/>

You can also contact your GP surgery for advice.

Automated reminder service

We operate an automated reminder service for the majority of our services. In most cases you will receive a call or text one week prior to your appointment. This call or text will remind you of the time and date of your appointment and will give you the opportunity to confirm or cancel the appointment. You will also receive a further reminder 48 hours before your appointment.

Getting to your appointment

Car parking space is limited, and the car parks are often busy at peak times. Please consider alternative transport. Further information on the options available for each of our hospitals can be found at www.esht.nhs.uk under 'Our locations'.

Parking

Our car parks are pay-on-foot. Patients and visitors may be taken to or collected from pick up/drop off points by our main entrances, however cars cannot wait in these areas. At Conquest there are additional private facilities for parking at the Hastings Centre opposite the Conquest Hospital.

Blue badge holders

Designated blue badge parking bays can be found close to hospital entrances. Registered blue badge holders can park in the blue badge parking bays free of charge for a maximum of three hours, when displaying a valid blue badge in the car windscreen.

Maps of blue badge parking zones are available on our website www.esht.nhs.uk/bluebays Blue badge holders who park in our pay-on-exit or pay-and-display car parks will be required to pay the full parking charge.

Travel expenses

Patients who receive benefits may be entitled to reimbursement of public transport fares. You will need to produce proof of your entitlement, such as your patient benefit book, letter, and your travel tickets. The receptionist can advise you of the claims process when you attend clinic.

Patient transport

If you require and are eligible for patient transport, please contact the South Central Ambulance Service on 0300 123 9841 so that they can assess your eligibility/arrange transport. This cannot be done any more than 14 days in advance of your appointment.

Preparing for your appointment

Please read all the letters that you receive from us carefully and ensure that you attend any additional appointments that you may receive. This may include tests prior to your appointment.

Medical history

We want to help you to be involved in your healthcare decisions. In order to do this, you may wish to write down some details of your medical history, such as dates of operations, illnesses, allergies etc, in advance of your appointment, to help you remember them when asked.

Asking questions

If you are asked to make a decision or you just want to know more information, you may have lots of questions.

It can help to write a list of questions you want to ask before your appointment. Asking questions also helps our staff understand what's important to you.

Some questions you might want to ask are:

- What are my treatment options?
- What are the pros and cons of my treatment options?
- Where can I get more support or advice?

There is space to record any questions you have at the end of this leaflet.

We are smoke-free

We are smoke-free. Smoking or vaping is not permitted anywhere on our sites.

Patient assistance

If you have a carer or an escort and you require a wheelchair, please ask at the information desk and we will be able to assist you. Our staff are unable to assist patients getting in or out of cars.

Don't forget to bring

- **A record of any medicines you may be taking.**
- Your appointment letter or card.
- Your record book with recent blood test results if you are taking anticoagulants such as Warfarin.
- Your records of blood/urine tests and insulin if you are diabetic.
- Any specimens requested in your appointment letter.
Please note: if you have been asked to provide a urine specimen you should collect the appropriate container from your GP surgery or a pharmacy. Other containers will not be accepted.
- Any private X-rays or medical records.
- Reading glasses, if required, as you may be asked to complete forms.

If your personal details have changed, for example your name, address, contact details or GP, please notify us of the change so that we can update your hospital records. This can be done at reception.

Checking in for your appointment

- When you arrive at the hospital for your appointment, please check in using the self-service kiosks located in the main reception areas, unless your letter directs you elsewhere.
- Please bring your appointment letter with you as this will help our staff to direct you to the correct clinical area.
- If you need specific support during your visit, please tell the receptionist.

During your appointment

- You will be under the care of a team led by the consultant named in your letter, but you may not be seen by them personally.
- As part of your consultation, it may be necessary for you to attend other departments for further investigations. Please be prepared to wait or come back as required for further appointments.
- Patients are seen in order of their appointment times. If you arrive early, it is unlikely that you will be seen before the time of your appointment.
- You may need to undress to be examined. Please wear clothing which is comfortable and easy to remove.
- Each patient requires individual attention and there may be emergency situations. While we try to keep to our appointment times, it is not always possible. Please speak to a nurse if you have waited longer than 30 minutes and no explanation for the delay has been given.

Chaperones

If you would like another member of staff present during a physical examination, please tell a nurse when you arrive for your appointment so that it can be arranged.

Language support services

If you require an interpreter, please contact the appointment centre on 0300 13 14 600 and they will be able to arrange one for you.

Attending with a baby

If you are bringing your baby to your appointment and wish to change or feed them in private, please ask a nurse and a room will be made available.

Surgical pre-assessment

If it is decided that you need surgery, you may be asked to attend a pre-assessment clinic.

Consent

Consent to treatment means a person must give permission before they receive any type of medical treatment, test or examination, following an explanation by a clinician.

Consent from a patient is needed regardless of the procedure and may be sought ahead of time, as well as on the day. You may withdraw consent at any time. In all cases your consent will be reviewed prior to treatment being carried out. Visit [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) and search 'consent' for more details.

Departure

At the end of your appointment, you may be handed a form which should be taken back to reception. A follow up appointment may be arranged at this time.

If you feel you would like further information regarding your medical condition or other health matters, please ask before you leave the clinic. We may have patient information leaflets or contact details of self-help groups.

We are always keen to hear feedback about your experience. Please take a few minutes to complete our Friends and Family Test survey before you leave the department. Posting boxes and surveys are available in all waiting areas and you can also leave feedback at esht.nhs.uk/fft

Research and medical students

We support research to improve patient care in the NHS. We participate in clinical research trials and your doctor or healthcare professional may discuss relevant clinical research trials with you. You can find out more at esht.nhs.uk/research

Medical students may be present in some clinics to observe, as this helps with their training and development. You will be asked if you are willing to be examined by a student. If you do not wish to be seen by students, please let us know. It will not affect your treatment in any way.

Infection prevention and control

We are committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Mask wearing in our hospitals is now a personal choice, unless you are advised to do so by a member of staff in the area you are visiting.

Overseas patients

If you are not ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom at the time you require treatment, you are regarded as an 'Overseas Visitor', and may be charged for the treatment you receive at any of our hospitals. This includes non-EEA nationals with a valid visa looking to access fertility services. To find out more, please visit esht.nhs.uk/overseas

My Health and Care Record

You can view your appointment and clinical letters, and access test results on 'My Health and Care Record', a secure online system. For more information and to sign up and receive all future correspondence this way, visit the [Sussex Health and Care website](https://www.sussexhospitals.nhs.uk/healthandcare).

Your personal information

The trust is bound by law to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and by the NHS Confidentiality Code of Practice. Every member of staff signs a confidentiality clause as part of their employment contract. The personal information we keep is accessed only by staff authorised to see it.

The trust shares limited information including names, addresses and telephone numbers with third party suppliers who support our services, such as the call/text reminder service. These contracts are governed under the law.

If you would like to know more about how we use your information, please write to the trust's Caldicott Guardian at the address below:

The Caldicott Guardian, Level 4, Management Corridor
East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
Conquest Hospital
The Ridge, St Leonards-on-sea
East Sussex TN37 7RD

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the patient experience team on 0300 131 4784 or esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net.

Alternative information formats

If you require any of our leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department on 0300 131 4434 or esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net

Questions

Feel free to use the space below to list any questions you have for your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The directorate group that has agreed this patient information leaflet:
Core Services

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Responsible clinician/author: Jo Byers, Outpatients

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