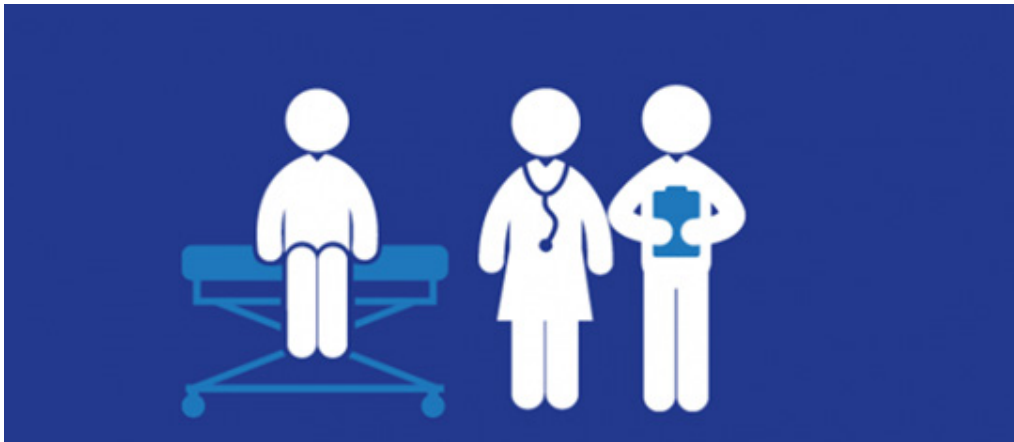


Preparing for Elective Surgery During the COVID-19 Pandemic



Patients preparing for elective surgery must prepare preoperatively to minimise the risks of hospital acquired COVID-19 infection with the following measures:

- STRICT self-isolation for 14 days prior to admission. Members of the same household should also be in isolation during this period.
- Show no symptoms such as cough and high temperature at pre-operative screening.
- Undertake a coronavirus swab test 48-72 hours before surgery, which must be negative.
- You may be asked to have a CT scan or chest x-ray about 24 hours before surgery.
- Exercise should still be encouraged in self-isolation.

SELF ISOLATION – What does it mean?

- Do not go out to work
- Do not use public transport like buses, trains, tubes or taxi
- Avoid visitors to your home
- Ask friends, family members or delivery services to carry out errands for you - such as getting groceries, medications or other shopping.
- Strictly avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of COVID-19. These symptoms may include high temperature, new and continuous cough, and loss of taste or smell.
- Follow the good hygiene principles below:

- Wash your hands more often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitiser.
- Wash your hands after you blow your nose, sneeze or cough, and before you eat or handle food
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home

LIVING WITH OTHER PEOPLE – What should I do?

- The people you live with should also self-isolate with you for the two weeks prior to your operation.
- Do not use shared spaces at the same time as the rest of your household.
- Stay away from others, in a room with an opening window, separate from others in your home.
- If you are in the same room as others aim to keep two metres (three steps) apart.
- Sleep separately from others wherever possible.
- If you have a separate bathroom, only you should use it.
- If you share a bathroom:
 - ask everyone to wipe down surfaces they have used.
 - Do not clean the toilet or bathroom yourself – especially after others have used it.
 - Use facilities first e.g. first person to shower each day.
 - Use separate towels from the other people in your house.
- If you share a kitchen, avoid using it while others are, and take meals back to your room to eat.
- If you have one, use a dishwasher, or use and wash your own utensils and a separate tea towel.



WHAT IF I HAVE OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES - such as work and taking care of family?

- Reducing the risk of you getting COVID-19 prior to your surgery is the priority right now so talk to your friends, family and employer about the importance of self-isolating at this time.
- Make plans with your family and friends on how to manage shopping and childcare.
- This guidance may be difficult for patients with carers, or for those living in residential/nursing homes. Please follow it as much as possible.
- Any essential carers or visitors who support you with everyday needs can continue to visit unless they have any symptoms of COVID-19. Everyone coming to your home should wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds on arrival to your house, and often while they are there.

COPING WITH ISOLATION

Staying at home may be difficult and frustrating, but there are things that you can do to help make it easier. These include:

- Plan ahead and think about what you will need in order to be able to stay at home for the full 14 days.
- Talk to your employer, friends and family to ask for their help to access the things you will need to make your stay at home a success.
- Think about and plan how you can get access to food and other supplies such as medications that you will need during this period.
- Ask friends or family to drop off anything you need or order supplies online, but make sure these are left outside your home for you to collect.
- Make sure that you keep in touch with friends and family over the phone or through social media
- If you feel well enough, light physical exercise that you can do indoors can be good for your wellbeing.
- Remember that your Clinical Nurse Specialist and/or Macmillan Cancer Information Support Service Team are here to answer your questions and support you at this difficult time.