Stop before your op:

important information for patients being referred to hospital for an operation

If you are due to have an operation, the sooner you stop smoking before it the better.

In addition to the general health risks associated with smoking, research has shown that **smokers are also more likely to suffer complications during and following their operations**. The Royal College of Anaesthetists advises smokers having operations to quit for several weeks before their operation in order to reduce the risk of breathing problems.

Risks associated with smoking and having an operation

There are a number of risks associated with smoking and having an operation:

During the operation, people who smoke

- Are more likely to need a higher dose of anaesthesia than people who do not smoke
- Have decreased blood oxygenation, leading to decreased oxygen delivery to tissues
- Are more likely to suffer complications

After the operation, people who smoke

- Are more likely to suffer complications
- Have an increased risk of chest infections and breathing problems
- Have an increased risk of blood clots
- Have a higher risk of heart complications
- Have a higher risk of infection
- Heal slower
- Are more likely to need readmitting to hospital
- Have an increased risk of dying in hospital

Some surgeons will not perform surgery on patients who smoke.

Health benefits of stopping smoking

Stopping smoking before your operation will have many health benefits. These include:

- A reduced risk of complications
- A shorter stay in hospital
- Faster recovery
- Less chance of infection
- Long term health benefits of quitting smoking, such as a reduced risk of lung cancer and heart disease

Support to stop smoking

NHS North Tyneside CCG has decided that anyone aged 18 or over who is to be referred for an operation and who is a smoker must have completed an 8-week smoking cessation course before being referred, where this is clinically relevant.

To access a course please ask at your GP practice, or call **0345 2000101** and say "NO SMOKE", or text "NO SMOKE" and your postcode to **80800**.