

What if I don't receive an appointment?

If you have not received details of your appointment within five working days of seeing your GP, please contact your GP practice.

What if I cannot keep the appointment?

It's important that you make every effort to be able to attend your appointment, so serious illness can be ruled out and your mind put at rest.

If you cannot keep the appointment, please let the hospital know as soon as possible so they can arrange another appointment for you.

Also if you do need treatment, this can be started as soon as possible which often leads to a better outcome.

Useful links for further information:

Cancer Research UK - Your urgent suspected cancer referral explained:

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/cancer-symptoms/what-is-an-urgent-referral>

Macmillan - Cancer Information and support:

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support>

Your urgent suspected cancer referral

To discuss receiving this information in other formats please contact:

Patient Advice and Liaison Service

Email: scwcsu.palscomplaints@nhs.net

Telephone 0300 561 0250

This leaflet was updated by NHS Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board in April 2024.



Why has my GP referred me to the hospital?

GPs can diagnose many problems, but sometimes they may need to arrange for you to see a hospital clinician who specialises in your particular symptoms.

This may be because:

- Your GP would like your symptoms investigated further.
- The results of the initial investigations carried out by your GP appeared abnormal.
- To rule out cancer.

Your referral to the hospital will be reviewed by a specialist. If the specialist feels that you don't need to be seen urgently, this will be discussed with your GP and you'll be informed.

What is an 'urgent suspected cancer referral'?

The urgent suspected cancer referral system means that a specialist can see any patient with symptoms that might indicate cancer as quickly as possible.

Cancer is more likely to be cured if detected and treated early.

We appreciate that this is a worrying time for you, but hopefully you will be reassured that your GP is taking your

symptoms seriously and that you will not be waiting too long to get an exact diagnosis.

Do I have cancer?

The majority of patients referred under the urgent suspected cancer referral system do not have cancer, but it is important to see a specialist as soon as possible to confirm or exclude a cancer diagnosis.

So what happens now?

If you haven't already been given an appointment time and date by your GP surgery before you leave today, you will be contacted by the surgery or the local hospital (excluding weekends and bank holidays) to arrange an appointment.

In the unlikely event you are not contactable by telephone, a letter will be sent out with details of your appointment.

Please make every effort to attend the first appointment you are given, which may be via telephone. However, if you cannot make the appointment or test you are given, please contact the hospital as soon as possible, so an alternative can be arranged.

Will I need any tests?

You may require specialised tests; these may take place before or during your first appointment at the hospital. This will help the specialist to understand the cause of your symptoms.

What can I do to help?

- If the local hospital or GP practice contacts you with an appointment offer, do your best to fit in with what they are offering.
- Ensure your GP practice has your correct address and contact details – including your mobile / daytime telephone number.
- Contact your GP practice if you have any concerns or questions about what is happening to you before attending your appointment.
- Try to prepare some questions to ask at the appointment, it may help to write them down in advance to take with you.
- Usually you can bring someone with you to your appointment; some people find it helpful to have a friend or a relative with them; this may not always be possible.