

COVID-19 Urgent Suspected Bowel Cancer Patient Information

We would like to update you about changes we are making to the urgent suspected bowel cancer referral pathway in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please be reassured that we have carefully considered how these changes may affect you and they have been made with your safety in mind.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic there will be significantly longer waits than usual for appointments and particularly diagnostic tests. You may also have a telephone consultation rather than be seen in clinic.

This is for your safety, as the decision to undertake a diagnostic test needs to be balanced against the risk of acquiring coronavirus, and of the consequences of doing so. Be assured that we will add you to our patient tracking list and we will offer you an appointment in the future.

Most patients referred to specialists on the urgent suspected bowel cancer referral pathway will not be diagnosed with cancer. However, the evidence suggests if patients with bowel cancer need to wait 3 to 6 months for investigation or treatment, they are very unlikely to come to harm from disease advancement.

Patients with more concerning symptoms will be seen as a priority. In the interim, if you feel your symptoms or condition worsen, then it is very important that you contact your GP surgery to discuss.

Further information about the suspected cancer patient pathway can be found on the London patient information leaflet, here <https://www.healthylondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID-19-Suspected-Cancer-Patient-Information-Leaflet.pdf>