

Department of Head and Neck

About The Rapid Access Head & Neck Clinic

What is a 'rapid access referral'?

Your general practitioner (GP) or dentist has chosen to refer you urgently to University Hospital for assessment to exclude the possibility of cancer in the head and neck area. We aim to see all patients referred to this clinic within two weeks of seeing your GP or dentist.

The priority for this appointment is for us to only confirm or exclude a diagnosis of head and neck cancer.

Does this mean I have cancer?

After the examination, we find that most patients who come to us do not have cancer but another condition. **If you do not have cancer** you may be referred back to your GP or dentist for further management of your symptoms.

What will happen in the clinic?

You will be seen by a member of the head and neck cancer team at University Hospital, usually a consultant surgeon. There is also a team of outpatient nurses and specialist cancer nurses to help you in the clinic.

You will be asked some questions about your symptoms, and the doctor will examine your head and neck area.

The doctor may perform an **endoscopy** which involves the passage of a



Patient Information

small telescope (“camera”) down your nose and into the voice box. This only takes a few minutes. It is not painful though it might be slightly uncomfortable. The doctor and nurse in clinic will explain the procedure to you. You do not need to starve before you attend the clinic even if this test needs to be carried out.

We understand that you may be nervous about your appointment. You may wish to bring a friend or relative with you for support. We are here to help you so please make sure you ask the clinic staff if there is anything that you don't understand or are unsure about.

Please Note:

You may require additional tests such as scans, needle test of a lump in the head and neck area or a biopsy. The doctor will explain these to you if they are needed. **Please understand that some investigations take place in different departments and you will often need another appointment on a different day to your first visit for these tests.** Since these will be done in other department (s), we will not necessarily be able to give the details of the appointment for those investigations; individual departments will contact you separately.

How long will the consultation take?

This can vary depending on what the doctor needs to do but generally appointments last about 15 minutes. We do our best to keep to time for your appointment but sometimes delays do occur. If this is the case the reception staff will try to keep you informed of your waiting time.

Can I go home straight away?

You will be allowed to go home straight after your appointment. There are no restrictions to driving or operating machinery. If you require further appointments these may be made on the day or may be sent to you in the post.

How do I get my results?

This varies from patient to patient. Sometimes your doctor will want to discuss these with you at another appointment but some patients can have their results sent by post. Based on the results, you may need additional

Patient Information

tests. We will write to you and to your doctor, should this be the case.
Please note that we are unable to give results over the telephone.

What should I do if I have not been contacted about my follow up arrangements?

If you think that you should have had a further appointment and you have not received an appointment time, please contact your consultant's secretary who should be able to help you.

Mr Walton: 024 7696 5685

Mr Sandhu: 024 7696 5057

Mr Prasad: 024 7696 5684

Mr Natesh: 024 7696 5606

Mr Howe: 024 7696 5610

What do I need to do now?

Make sure that your doctor has your correct address and telephone number, including mobile number. The hospital will send you an appointment letter as soon as possible; if there is not sufficient time to send you a letter they will contact you by phone. If you are unable to attend the appointment sent to you, please phone your GP/dentist/hospital immediately. It is important that you arrange another date and time if you have to cancel an appointment.

Further Information

If you have any questions or comments about this information sheet, please contact the team on one of the numbers above.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us on any of the numbers mentioned above and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

To give feedback on this leaflet please email feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk

Patient Information

Document History

Department:	Head and NEck
Contact:	25684
Updated:	February 2021
Review:	February 2023
Version:	1.1
Reference:	HIC/LFT/2329/18