

Pre-assessment Clinic

What is pre-assessment?

Pre-assessment is a process during which we take a medical, nursing and social history from you and carry out various tests. This ensures your fitness for surgery and can help prepare you for your forthcoming operation.

Why do I need to attend the pre-assessment clinic?

You need to attend the pre-assessment clinic to ensure that we are aware of your full medical history and that all required investigations have been carried out before your planned surgery. This reduces the risk of your operation being cancelled on the day of surgery and helps to ensure that your post-operative recovery is the best it can be.

Because pre-assessment takes place before your admission it permits existing or new medical conditions to be treated appropriately by referring you back to your GP or to a specialist before you have your operation.

It is also a good opportunity for you to discuss your planned care. Where possible you will be provided with written information about the surgery you are having.

Some patients are sent for pre-assessment immediately following their outpatient appointment. However, if the surgery is not urgent or will not be carried out for a few weeks, some patients may be asked to come back at a later date for their pre-assessment.

If your initial outpatient appointment was at other another hospital you may need to be assessed by the pre-assessment team at Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead. If required, an appointment will be arranged before your surgery.

If you have an existing medical condition (for example, high blood pressure, diabetes, underactive thyroid, asthma etc.) it would be a good idea to arrange to see your GP or practice nurse before attending pre-assessment so you can be checked to ensure that your treatment is still appropriate. This helps reduce the risk of your operation being postponed.

What should I bring to the pre-assessment clinic?

- a completed medical questionnaire (if supplied) or details of any medical conditions you have or have had and details of any operations you have had
- a completed patient information form (if supplied) or details of your next of kin and GP
- a copy of your current prescription/s or list of all medications you are currently taking
- any medical correspondence /letters/information you may have about yourself
- a list of questions you may have

What should I expect to happen during my visit?

You will be seen by one of the pre-assessment nurses, who may refer you on to be seen by a doctor, anaesthetist, specialist nurse, psychologist or other member of the team. For this reason, pre-assessment can take more than two hours. However, if you only need to be seen by the pre-assessment nurse, the assessment will not usually take very long.

It may not always be possible for the anaesthetist to see you on the same day as your appointment in the pre-assessment clinic. If this is the case, we will arrange another appointment for you before your planned operation.

During your visit you will undertake some general health checks which may include some or all of the following:

- blood pressure, pulse and temperature checks
- height and weight measurements including Body Mass Index (BMI)
- electrocardiogram (ECG) – this is a tracing of the heart rate, rhythm and electrical activity in the heart muscle
- blood tests
- photographs
- spirometry – a breathing test
- x-ray, though this is rare

When results are abnormal, you will be informed and appropriate referrals will be made. This may mean that your operation date needs to be postponed pending further investigation or it may simply mean that the test needs to be repeated due to some anomaly. Please be aware that not all patients require the same investigations.

Infection control

We will also perform any necessary infection control screening and investigations e.g. screening for MRSA. We will provide you with more information on the day depending on what tests are required.

Contact us

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Pre-Assessment Clinic

Tel: 01342 414292

Please ask if you would like this leaflet in large print or an alternative format.