

**Patient
Information**

Biofeedback therapy

Introduction

This leaflet gives you information about biofeedback therapy. The whole leaflet should be read so that you understand what is required to make your treatment safe and effective.

Your appointment is at the Gastrointestinal Laboratory (GI) located in the GI/Lung Function Department at Cheltenham General Hospital. You should report to Lung Function Department reception on arrival at the hospital.

What is biofeedback therapy?

Biofeedback therapy is for people with constipation and/or incontinence. During the therapy session the physiologist will teach you how to use your bowel muscles correctly using exercises and other techniques.

Why am I having biofeedback therapy?

You have been referred for biofeedback therapy because you may benefit from improving your bowel habit. The muscles needed for opening your bowels may be weak or not co-ordinating properly.

How does the therapy work?

You will be asked questions about your bowel habits. The physiologist will then show you how you can make changes to your bowel habit by giving you a personal programme of exercises and advice. The physiologist will also answer any questions that you may have.

How often will I need to attend?

You and the physiologist will agree the number of sessions you will need to attend. This will depend on the progress you make during the course of the therapy. Each session will last between 30 to 45 minutes.

Reference No.

GHPI0567_06_25

Department

Gastrointestinal

Review due

June 2028

Patient Information

Benefits of biofeedback therapy

In order to improve your bowel habit, you will need to practice the exercises and follow the advice given. You will need to continue these new habits for the rest of your life.

- 9 out of 10 people find their personal and social lives are greatly improved as they are no longer controlled by their bowel habit
- The remaining 1 out of 10 people feel they have a better understanding of how and why their bowels work as they do

Risks

There are no risks from biofeedback therapy. We will monitor your progress at the follow up appointments.

What will happen during the first session?

The physiologist will give you a programme of exercises to practice and advice on your bowel habit.

This may include:

- how you sit on the toilet
- your diet
- laxative use
- anything else the physiologist may think will help you

Follow up appointments

The physiologist will check your progress by asking questions. If appropriate you will be given further advice and exercises.

It may be appropriate for you to have an investigation on the muscles in your back passage or to practice your exercises in the department using a small tube placed in your back passage. This will **not** take place at your first appointment. The reason for the investigation would be fully discussed with you and will not take place without your consent.

Patient Information

Contact information

If you have any questions or wish to speak to the physiologist between appointments, please contact the GI/Lung Function Department.

We are not always able to answer the telephone during the day. Please leave a message on our answerphone and we will contact you as soon as we can.

GI/Lung Function Department

Cheltenham General Hospital

Tel: 0300 422 2977

Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

Further information

Gastroenterology

Website: www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/our-services/services-we-offer/gastroenterology/

Content reviewed: June 2025

Making a choice

Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.



Ask 3 Questions

To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you are asked to make a choice about your healthcare.

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation.

* Ask 3 Questions is based on Shepherd RL, et al. Three questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial. Patient Education and Counselling. 2011;84: 379-85



<https://aqua.nhs.uk/resources/shared-decision-making-case-studies/>