



Gloucestershire Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Pre-operative anaemia

Introduction

You have been given this leaflet because one of the blood tests taken when you came to the Pre-Operative Assessment Clinic shows that you are anaemic and/or iron and vitamin levels in your blood are low.

This can mean you have a higher risk of complications after surgery which may slow your recovery.

Correcting this before your surgery will reduce the need for a blood transfusion during or after your surgery. It will also make you feel better and help speed up your recovery.

In order to correct your anaemia, we need to increase the iron levels in your blood. To get a supply of iron tablets please go to your local pharmacy and ask for 200 micrograms (mg) Iron tablets. Once we have all your blood tests results, we will contact you to tell you to either; stop taking the tablets (your blood tests are normal), continue taking them or to come in to have iron given through a drip in your arm. This is explained in more detail on the following pages.

Iron tablets (ferrous sulphate)

One iron tablet (200mg) to be taken every other day. It can take 4 weeks to restore iron to normal levels. Take the tablet on an empty stomach or with a drink containing vitamin C (such as orange juice) which helps absorption. You should take the iron tablet at least 2 hours before or 4 hours after taking antacid medication.

Some patients find the iron medication hard to tolerate. It can cause constipation, diarrhoea or nausea (feeling

sick). If you are not able to tolerate the tablets for any reason, please let the staff at the Pre-operative Assessment Clinic know. The telephone number is at the end of this leaflet.

After 4 weeks you will need to arrange a blood test with your GP or you can contact pre assessment to arrange a drop in appointment. This is to check if the anaemia has been corrected.

Iron given by infusion

(ferric carboxymaltose) or Monofer® Iron (III) isomaltoside). If you have surgery due in the next 4 weeks or are not able to tolerate or absorb tablets that you take by mouth, you may need to have an iron infusion (given to you through a drip). A thin tube will be inserted into a vein in your arm. The iron would then be injected through the tube. This would mean that you would need to come to the hospital for about 2 hours.

In some cases, you may need to come to the hospital for a second dose. After 4 weeks, we would like you to have a repeat blood test to check if the anaemia has been corrected. This can be at your GP's surgery, or arranged and book with us in pre assessment for a drop in appointment. Other options would be to attend the drop in clinics at the Edward Jenner in Gloucestershire Royal Hospital or West Block outpatients in Cheltenham General Hospital. Both open Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:00pm, however you may be waiting for a period of time.

If your operation is sooner, we may check your iron levels when you come in for surgery.

Your vitamin B12 and folate levels will have been checked at the Pre-operative Assessment Clinic. If these are low, we may ask your GP to correct them before your operation.

Contact information

Pre-operative Assessment Clinic

Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

Tel: 0300 422 5722

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

Cheltenham General Hospital

Tel: 0300 422 2559

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

Pre-assessment Booking Appointment

Tel: 0300 422 4914

Monday to Friday, 08:00 am to 4:00 pm

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