

**Patient
Information**

Chemotherapy clinics for haematology patients

Information for patients attending appointments at the Edward Jenner Unit (EJU) Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

Introduction

This leaflet is intended to give you information on what will happen before you receive your chemotherapy treatment and what will happen on the actual day of your treatment. We hope this leaflet covers all your queries. Please ask any member of staff if you have any questions.

Clinic information

Before receiving any chemotherapy, you will be given a date to attend a group pre-chemotherapy appointment with one of our nurses. The nurse will give you verbal and written information about the side effects of the medication and information about the chemotherapy helpline. You will also be seen by your key worker at another appointment, which may be on another day. You are welcome to bring 1 family member or friend to this visit. It is not always easy to remember all the information you may be given and having someone with you may help. **If you have any special needs, please let us know and we will aim to make any adjustments needed to accommodate them.**

If, within 3 working days of seeing the consultant, you have not been given a date for your pre-chemotherapy appointment, please call on Tel: 0300 422 3366. Your message will be passed on to our booking team who will contact you by telephone on the same day. It is essential that you attend this appointment, as vital information will be given to you about your treatment plan.

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Transport

When you attend the Edward Jenner Unit for your chemotherapy appointment, normally you are free to go home as soon as your treatment has been given. Therefore, it is advantageous to provide your own transport.

It is advisable that you do not drive home after your first visit just in case the treatment we give you has any side effects. Therefore, please arrange for someone to drive you home on this occasion. There are a few treatments for which we give you medication on the day that could affect your concentration for the remainder of the day. We suggest you do not drive in this instance. Please ask the nurses to clarify if this applies to you.

If you do not have your own transport and require hospital transport to bring you to the clinic, please inform your doctor or nurse so that they can request a booking for transport to be made. Transport is usually available for patients only. If you need a family member to accompany you, please let us know and we will try to arrange this.

Hospital transport is provided by Arriva Transport Solutions. If you find that for future appointments you require transport and it has not been pre-booked,

Tel: 08454 600 6068. When you make your booking you will need to provide the following information:

- Registered GP address
- NHS number
- Date of travel, where you are going and name of the department
- Any medical needs, mobility or access issues
- Where you are travelling from and if someone will be accompanying you to and from your appointment.

Appointments can also be made via Arriva Transport Solutions:
Website: <https://pts.arriva.co.uk>

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Car parking

A parking permit request form is available from the nursing staff in EJU. Please take this to the Parking Shop on the ground floor of the multi storey car park. The staff there will advise you where this permit can be used (it will only be valid in certain car parks on the Gloucestershire Royal Hospital site).

What to do when you arrive

Please ensure that you let the receptionist at EJU know when you arrive. This allows us to make sure that you do not miss your turn and to record the time you have arrived. Most patients will be given two appointments on two different days. One will be to attend the clinic for blood tests and to be assessed by the doctor or nurse practitioner, and the other will be for their chemotherapy.

Blood tests

We encourage all patients to go to their GP surgery to have their blood taken prior to their clinic appointment. The blood must be taken within 48 hours of your chemotherapy appointment. This option will be discussed with you at your pre chemotherapy appointment. You will be issued with the appropriate blood test request forms to take to your GP practice. If you are not given a form please ask for one.

Will I see the consultant?

Although you have been referred to the consultant's clinic you may not necessarily see the same consultant every time you come. However, you will be seen by a member of the team or one of our pharmacists.

During your first visit, the doctor will explain your treatment to you and any possible side effects that you may experience, whilst answering any questions you may have. It can be helpful to bring a member of your family with you or a friend if you wish. It is not always easy to remember all the information you may be given, and having someone with you may help.

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When you are happy that you have understood the information provided, you will then be asked to sign the consent provided by the doctor or Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS).

On the day of treatment there may sometimes be a delay, as the chemotherapy you are due to receive may need to be prepared on that day. The chemotherapy medications are prepared in a specialised environment and go through many rigorous checks before they are ready to be used. This may take a couple of hours. We will always keep you informed of any delay.

You are welcome to bring a family member or friend to accompany you into the treatment area on your first visit, unless there is a specific reason for a carer to remain present.

On subsequent visits they will usually not be able to accompany you. This is due to safety reasons and limited space in the clinical area. However, there is usually space for them to remain in the waiting area.

Why has another patient gone in before me?

There are many clinics seeing and treating patients. If a patient arrives after you and is called in before you, it does not mean they are jumping the queue. They are probably seeing a different doctor or attending a nurse led clinic.

Occasionally, if a patient is too ill to wait in the waiting room, they may be fast tracked through the clinic; we hope that you will understand this.

What happens next?

When you are called in for your treatment, you will sit in a reclining chair and a specially trained nurse will give you your chemotherapy. This could take from ten minutes to several hours depending on what medication you are having. Other medication may also be administered at this time to combat any side effects of the medicines.

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Normally you are free to go home as soon as your treatment has been given. If you have had intravenous chemotherapy (treatment given into the vein) it is advisable that you do not drive home after your first visit, just in case the medications give you any side effects.

When you see your consultant they will request your next appointment and a letter will be sent out to you in the post. If you do not hear within 7 days please contact the reception at the Edward Jenner Unit. The telephone number is listed at the end of this leaflet.

Clinical trials/Research team

The Edward Jenner Unit supports clinical research and this option may be discussed with you at your appointment. Participation in a clinical trial is entirely voluntary. Clinical research is the way doctors test new and, hopefully better treatments, to make sure they are safe and work well. For some people, it could mean trying a new treatment when other treatments have failed.

When the doctor does ask a patient to take part, they will explain everything that it involves. It is then up to the patient whether to take part or not. If they do, they will be asked to sign a form giving their consent. Choosing not to take part in a clinical trial will not affect the level of care a patient receives.

If you would like more information, please speak to your doctor/consultant when you attend, or you may like to contact the research nurses directly on: Tel: 0300 422 6886.

Other information

Please take your usual medication on the day of your treatment and bring any regular medication with you such as painkillers and Insulin.

You may eat and drink as normal on the day of treatment. There is a café and shop available in the atrium where you can buy drinks and light snacks. There is also Fosters café within the hospital, which you and your family are welcome to use.

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If your treatment requires you to be in the department for the day a light lunch will be provided. You are welcome to bring a packed lunch of your own if you would prefer to do so.

It is advisable to avoid alcohol on the day of treatment because it may make the side effects from your treatment worse.

There are a team of volunteers who help in the department. They will offer you hot and cold drinks when you are receiving your treatment.

You may wish to bring a book or iPod/iPad with you to help pass the time and maybe a cushion for your personal comfort. You will be responsible for keeping your belongings safe at all times.

If you wish to use your mobile phone, please consider the comfort of other patient's whilst doing so.

Due to the toxic nature of the medication, we do not allow children in the treatment area under any circumstance.

Chemotherapy Helpline

The Chemotherapy Helpline is available 24 hours a day and answered by nurses with expert knowledge who provide advice and help if you are feeling unwell or if you have any questions relating to your chemotherapy. Please be aware that at some periods during the day, this helpline becomes very busy and so your calls may take some time to be answered. **Do not give up; your call will be answered.**

Chemotherapy Helpline

Tel: 0300 422 3444

Please note - do not use this number for any other queries.

Prescriptions

You are now entitled to apply for a prescription charge exemption (already available to over 60's). Exemption forms can be obtained from pharmacies, GP practices, the FOCUS Cancer Information and Support Centre in the Oncology outpatient area at Cheltenham General Hospital or the nurse specialist coordinating your care.

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If you are already taking medication, prescribed by your own GP or by another hospital, please bring with you to your first hospital visit. This will allow your consultant to know exactly what you are taking.

Any medication prescribed by the doctors during your hospital appointment must be dispensed by the hospital pharmacy. The pharmacy is situated in the same corridor as the Edward Jenner Unit.

Follow-up appointment

At the end of a course of chemotherapy, you will usually be given an appointment to be seen again by the consultant at a follow-up clinic.

Further care

You may feel that you have not had all your questions answered about your illness. Your consultant will want you to know as much about your condition and treatment as you wish to know. You may feel that you have not had as much time to talk about things to the doctor as you would like. Time is limited at each consultation, but it may be possible for another member of the team to answer your questions. One of the team will be your keyworker (CNS). If you do not know who your keyworker is, please ask.

Please do not hesitate in talking to the people who are dealing directly with you, for example your keyworker or the named nurse for the clinic. If they are unable to answer your questions, they will be able to arrange for you, or a family member (with your consent), to have a further meeting with your consultant.

The FOCUS Cancer Information and Support Centre

The Focus Cancer Information and Support Centre is located in the Oncology waiting area at Cheltenham General Hospital, and is open from 8:30am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday. Please drop in for whatever assistance you may need at any time during your treatment, even if it is just for a chat.

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Personal Macmillan Organisers are available from the FOCUS centre. These folders contain a lot of appropriate information.

Other services include:

- NHS wig clinic, currently held on Tuesdays
- Six free sessions of various complementary therapies
- Monthly 'Look Good...Feel Better' beauty workshops
- A comprehensive selection of seasonal attractive headwear is available at reasonable prices for those suffering from hair loss
- Information relating to travel insurance
- Information about local B&B's
- DVD and book loans
- Greeting cards
- Nearly new paperbacks
- Last but not least, a friendly welcome.

The Maggie's Centre

Maggie's centre offers support and advice for people, their relatives and friends affected by cancer, in a warm, friendly and inviting atmosphere. The centre is supported by professionals and holds classes, workshops and events free of charge.

You can drop in at any time for advice, a drink, and an informal chat or just simply to make new friends.

Open most weekdays from 9:00am to 5:00pm and Saturdays 10:00am to 4:00pm.

Maggie's is situated behind Cheltenham General Hospital in College Bath Road the contact number is at the end of this leaflet.

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Contact information

Chemotherapy Helpline

Tel: 0300 422 3444

Please do not use this number for any other queries.

Edward Jenner Unit Clinic - appointments

Tel: 0300 4222 5243

Edward Jenner Unit - appointments for chemotherapy and other supportive therapy

Tel: 0300 422 5250

LINC Outpatients Department

Tel: 0300 422 2868

The Maggie's Centre

Tel: 01242 250611

Oncology Bed Manager

To check if a bed is available for inpatient treatment Tel: 0300 422 2222 and ask for bleep number 1457

Transport queries for Edward Jenner Unit patients (on the day of treatment)

Tel: 0300 422 5255

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