

An urgent referral has been completed for you by your GP practice. The referral has been made to look into your symptoms and find the cause as quickly as possible. This includes ruling out the possibility of cancer. While 90% of patients referred do not have cancer, for those that do, detecting it early means the best chance of a full recovery. Urgent referrals are very common in the NHS and are used in order to get patients seen quickly.

This leaflet will help answer the following questions:

- What happens next?
- What if I can't make the appointment I am given?
- What do I need to do?
- How do I get to the clinic or hospital and what will happen once I'm there?
- Who should I bring?
- Who can I talk to?

What happens next?

An urgent referral means you will be offered an appointment within a few weeks so that your symptoms can be looked into quickly. Your appointment may be with a specialist or be for a test or scan. You will receive a letter or phone call within the next few days from the clinic or hospital to provide you with an appointment date and time. If you do not receive an appointment within seven days of being referred, please contact your GP practice immediately to let them know that you have not heard anything. If you are struggling to understand the appointment instructions or you find them to be unclear, don't hesitate to ask your GP practice for support.

Patient safety notice

- If your symptoms change, progress, or worsen please inform your GP practice urgently. If you can't contact your GP practice, please contact 111 or go directly to your nearest Accident and Emergency department.
- Check that your GP practice has your most up-to-date contact number and address.
- If you will need a translator for your appointment, please contact the clinic or hospital directly to let them know beforehand.

What if I can't make the appointment I am given?

Please contact the hospital immediately if you are unable to attend your appointment to arrange an alternative date and time as soon as possible, to avoid any delays in finding out what is causing your symptoms. Please do keep in mind that if you do not attend your appointment, you will be discharged back to the care of your GP practice so that the appointment can be given to someone else. If you need help with rearranging your appointment please contact your GP practice.

What do I need to do?

Attending your appointment is the most important step you need to take in order to avoid delays and find answers to what is causing your symptoms.

How do I get to the clinic or hospital?

If you are unable to use public transport, drive or arrange your own transport you may be able to use the patient transport service. Please contact your GP practice as soon as possible to find out if this service is available.

What will happen at the clinic or hospital?

At your appointment, a specialist will review your symptoms and provide you with more information about what will happen next. If any tests are needed during your initial appointment, you will be informed of this in advance, and in some cases, you will be asked to have tests prior to seeing the specialist, so please read any instructions carefully.

Who should I bring?

There will likely be a lot of information to take in so it can be helpful to bring a family member or friend with you to the appointment for support and to help you understand what the specialist will discuss with you. You may also find it helpful to make a note of any questions you have beforehand to make the most of your appointment.

Who can I talk to?

Being referred urgently can create uncertainty and make you feel worried or anxious. If you would like to talk to someone about how you are feeling, please do, there is always someone who can provide support. We would also encourage you to speak to family and friends, or your GP practice who would be happy to discuss this with you. There are also organisations dedicated to supporting you. Please see some of the organisations below that offer support: You can call [Samaritans](#) on 116 123 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year, or [Macmillan](#) on 0808 808 00 00 every day, 8am – 8pm.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call your GP practice.



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