

## Your Hospital Follow up Appointments and Covid-19

Due to Covid-19, most follow up appointments have been moved to telephone calls rather than face to face. The following is a checklist of things that could be talked about during a telephone follow up appointment, as well as some questions you could ask to make sure you get the most out of your appointment.

### **Preparation**

Your appointment letter may give you a time but it's likely that it may say to expect a call at any time during the clinic's morning or afternoon session. It's important that you listen out for this call. The call may come from an 'unknown' number so please do answer it. If you have previously blocked unknown numbers, your clinical team may not be able to get in touch with you. You may need to change this setting on your phone temporarily.

If you would like a family member to listen in to the consultation, check that you can put your phone on loudspeaker. Practice using this before your appointment. Also, let the team know at the start of the call who is listening with you. If you need the call to be on your mobile phone, please tell the doctor or nurse to ring back on this number as soon as the appointment begins.

Have your list of questions with you and a pen and some paper to make notes.

Some of the specialist nurses for sarcoma have now been asked to work in other areas of the hospital. Some of the doctors are also working different hours. The doctor or nurse contacting you may not have met you, so they will be grateful for any information you can give them.

### **Information the Doctor or Nurse may ask you for:**

- Hospital or NHS number
- Diagnosis date
- Surgical procedures and dates of these
- Radiotherapy – number of treatments and dates
- Chemotherapy or clinical trial - the date your treatment finished, how many cycles you had, and how you coped with the treatment
- Date of your last CT/MRI/PET scan and which hospital you had it at
- Current medication and, in particular, any changes to your medication recently

### **Your current symptoms including:**

- How you are feeling at the moment and any changes since your last appointment
- Energy/activity levels
- Pain
- Mobility and ability to do the activities you want to do

If you are having any problems with any of the above, make sure you ask your doctor or nurse whether you can receive further support. This may include a referral to a physiotherapist, occupational therapist, dietician or psychologist.

### **If you had surgery in the past including:**

- Any differences to your scar

We know that most local recurrences, if they happen, are picked up by the person with sarcoma.

Run your hand over the length of your scar. Are there any new lumps or bumps to feel? Does it look different?

It is useful to take a photo of your scar to compare it to later on, so you can notice any changes. You can also ask another person to look at and feel the scar with you.

### **Questions to ask your Doctor or Nurse**

- Before your appointment, write a list of any questions or concerns you may have. Write down the answers when you have asked the doctor or nurse.
- Make sure you know what the next steps are at the end of the call. When is your next CT scan and/or appointment?
- Make sure you know who you should get in touch with if there is a problem between follow up calls and how you should contact them.

### **CT Scan appointment**

These types of scan are still taking place. However, you may need to have your scan on a different machine and in a different hospital. Check your appointment letter carefully to check this.

- Please attend alone if you can and arrive just in time. Some centres are asking you to wait in your car and calling you by phone just in time for your appointment.
- Leave promptly after your appointment and please follow hand hygiene guidelines.
- If you are considering not attending, please discuss moving your appointment to a later date with your key worker/clinical team.

### **Sarcoma UK's Support Line**

If you have questions or concerns at any time, please contact Sarcoma UK's Support Line:

Telephone: 0808 801 0401

Email: [supportline@sarcoma.org.uk](mailto:supportline@sarcoma.org.uk)

Text: 07860 058830

*The template for this document was originally produced by Mesothelioma UK.*