

Preparing for your stay at St Thomas'

This information leaflet tells you about some of the things you need to do before you come to hospital. It should be read alongside your admission letter which will tell you:

- the date and time of your admission and where you need to go
- whether you need to follow any special instructions (for example not eating or bringing a urine sample)
- who to contact if you have any questions
- what to do if you cannot make your admission date.

We look forward to welcoming you to our hospital. On your arrival on the ward we will give you a welcome pack which will tell you more about the people you can expect to meet and the facilities available in the hospital. Your nurse will go through the contents of the pack with you.

About your stay

We will do everything we can to make your stay as comfortable as possible. Please see the checklist on page four for information on what to bring with you and what to leave at home so that you can start planning for your hospital stay.

We strive to offer you the best possible treatment in a clean and safe environment. Our staff are here to help and should treat you with dignity and respect at all times. We expect patients to treat our staff with the same dignity and respect, they are here for you.

Please tell us if there is anything we can do to make your visit better.

Visiting hours

We welcome and encourage your family and close friends to visit you during your hospital stay. Visiting hours are usually between 2pm and 8pm.

Overnight accommodation

If your relatives and friends would like to stay overnight, we have on-site hotel style rooms with shared bathroom facilities available in Gassiot House Lodge. The prices are:

- £65 per night for a single room
- £75 per night for a twin room.

For more information please call the accommodation office on **020 7188 0276** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) or email [**stthomas.accommodation@gstt.nhs.uk**](mailto:stthomas.accommodation@gstt.nhs.uk)

Facilities

There are a number of useful services for patients and visitors at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital. These include shops, hairdressers (at St Thomas'), a cinema, cafes and restaurants. You can find more information on our website at **www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/ourfacilities**

Your ward

You will usually be staying in a ward that specialises in the care of the condition or illness you have. These wards are made up of separate bays. The other people in your bay will be the same sex as you, however the ward may have people of different sexes on it. There are toilets and bathrooms nearby that are for people of your sex only.

We will always offer a chaperone if an intimate area of your body needs examining. Please feel free to request a chaperone at any time during your stay.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones should not be used in some areas as they may interfere with equipment or disturb other patients. In the places where you can use mobile phones, please keep them on silent mode and be considerate to other patients. There are payphones around the hospital.

WiFi

Free access to the internet is available for all patients, visitors and carers. To connect to our wireless network:

- 1) Go to your WiFi settings and select WiFiSPARK HotSpot
- 2) Connect
- 3) Enter your name and email address
- 4) Read and accept the terms and conditions
- 5) You will then be connected.

Please note that some internet content may be blocked, and WiFi should not be used for viewing TV programmes or making phone calls or video calls (including FaceTime and Skype).

Smoking

Guy's and St Thomas' are now no smoking hospitals. You are not allowed to smoke or use e-cigarettes on Trust property, including outside areas.

If you smoke, you should try to stop smoking, as this increases the risk of developing a chest infection. Smoking can also delay wound healing. For help giving up smoking, please speak to your healthcare professional, or call the Trust stop smoking service on **020 7188 0995**, or call the NHS Smoking Helpline on **0800 169 0 169**.

As soon as you can after receiving your admission letter

1. Plan your journey to St Thomas' Hospital, see section on planning your journey below.
2. Check the appointment details and contact the number on your admission letter if you can't make your admission date. We can then rearrange your admission and give your bed to someone else.
3. Make sure we have your mobile number so we can text you reminders.
4. If you need an interpreter or signer and one wasn't booked when you arranged your admission date please call **020 7188 8815** or email **languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk**

Planning your journey

There are good public transport links to the hospital. Maps of the hospital are available on our website and travel details are below. For more information visit our website www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/travel.

Help with travel costs - If you are on a low income or benefits you might be entitled to reclaim your travel costs to and from hospital. In some cases we may also be able to pay your congestion charge. For more information about help with travel costs, please contact the cashier's office at **St Thomas'** on **020 7188 2329** or at **Guy's** on **020 7188 2343**. You can also find more information on our website at www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/travel

Patient transport service – If you need to use our patient transport service, a member of our team needs to assess whether you are eligible. This involves a brief telephone interview and is completely confidential. Assessments must be carried out at least 48 hours before your appointment. If you think you may be eligible for this transport service, please contact the Patient Transport Assessment Team on **020 7188 2888**.

Accessibility – All pedestrian entrances at St Thomas' are suitable for wheelchairs. There are accessible toilets in key locations around the hospital, including the main reception. Induction loops are also available in the main reception. Material in a format accessible to you can sometimes also be provided.

Within three days before coming to hospital

Please call the number on your admission letter to discuss whether you are well enough for treatment if you have had any of the following in the three days running up to your admission date:

- exposure to an infection such as chickenpox, measles, mumps or rubella
- signs or symptoms of such infections
- a cough or a cold, or other breathing or chest problems
- any other illness.

Infection - help us to protect you

Please call the number on your appointment letter if you have been exposed to an infection such as chicken pox, or if you develop diarrhoea and vomiting **three days before** your appointment.

Cleaning your hands is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of infection – use the hand rub provided to clean your hands when entering and leaving the clinic. If there is no hand rub left in the pump please let a member of staff know.

Before you leave home to come to hospital

Please do not leave home until we have contacted you on the day of your admission to confirm a bed is available. We will do everything we can to make sure there is no change to your admission date, but very occasionally we need to prioritise someone who needs emergency treatment.

If transport has been arranged to bring you to hospital and has arrived to collect you before we have confirmed a bed is available, please contact the admissions office number on your letter for advice. Don't come in until the admissions office has confirmed that a bed is available.

Checklist

Before you leave home, please check you have:

- ☐ your admission letter and any other information we have sent you
- ☐ **all of the medicines that you are currently taking or using with you**, including those you get from your doctor on prescription, medicines you have bought yourself which were not prescribed by your doctor, and any alternative medicines, such as herbal remedies. As well as oral medicines (such as tablets, capsules, liquids), please bring any inhalers, sprays, patches, creams/ointments, eye/ear/nose drops, or injections that you use
- ☐ the name, address, postcode and telephone number of your GP
- ☐ small amounts of money for newspapers, television or telephone
- ☐ nightclothes, dressing gown and slippers
- ☐ comfortable day clothes
- ☐ clothes that you can wear on your journey home
- ☐ your glasses and contact lenses (labelled with your name)
- ☐ a toothbrush (not electric) and toothpaste
- ☐ soap and shampoo and other toiletries
- ☐ a brush or comb
- ☐ a flannel and a towel (we can provide towels if you forget to bring one)
- ☐ your diary for booking follow-up appointments

You might also want to bring:

- ☐ proof of entitlement to free travel costs if appropriate
- ☐ items of religious importance to you
- ☐ your hearing aid
- ☐ sanitary products, such as tampons
- ☐ shaving equipment
- ☐ mobility aids, such as a walking stick or frame
- ☐ books, magazines and knitting
- ☐ writing paper, pens and your address book
- ☐ mobile phone
- ☐ tissues and baby wipes
- ☐ non-perishable snacks, squash and/or cordials

Please do not bring:

- ✗ large amounts of money, jewellery or other valuables
- ✗ large bags or suitcases, as storage space is limited
- ✗ alcohol
- ✗ electrical items (such as hairdryers)
- ✗ food that needs reheating (we cannot reheat food for infection control reasons)

Planning for your return home

When you are ready to leave hospital we will plan your return home (sometimes called 'discharge') with you, to make sure you have everything you need before you go. You may need medication or details of further treatment while you are at home. We will also tell you about follow-up appointments and any other support you need when you go home.

You may want to prepare for your return home by:

- ☐ Stocking up on non-perishable foods, such as tinned, frozen food, long-life milk
- ☐ Cooking extra meal portions and freezing them
- ☐ Arranging for a relative or friend to stay with you if you live alone
- ☐ Asking a relative or friend to visit you regularly throughout the day when you are back home

- ☐ Making sure you have a good supply of your usual medicines
- ☐ Arranging for someone to help care for your young children until you have recovered
- ☐ Asking a neighbour or friend to look after your pets
- ☐ Checking with your insurance company when you will be able to drive after your operation

It is important that you arrange for someone to collect you from the hospital.

Travelling to St Thomas'

Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7EH

Tel: **020 7188 7188**

By tube

The nearest tube stations to St Thomas' hospital are:

- Westminster - District, Circle and Jubilee lines (10 minutes walk)
- Waterloo - Bakerloo, Jubilee and Northern lines (15 minutes walk – follow signage for South Bank)
- Lambeth North - Bakerloo line (15 minutes walk) Please note that Lambeth North station is closed until mid February 2017, check www.tfl.gov.uk for up to date information.

There is a taxi rank outside Waterloo station.

By bus

You can get the following buses to St Thomas':

- 12, 53, 148, 159, 211, 453, N109, N155 and N381 – Bus stops D and E on Westminster Bridge Road.
- 77, 507, C10 – bus stop C on Lambeth Palace Road.
- 76, 77, 211, 341, 381, 507, N381 and RV1 – bus stop W on York Road
- RV1 – bus stop Y at Millennium Wheel/London Eye

It is important that you check before you travel, for further information about buses and tubes, please call Transport for London customer services on **0343 222 1234** (24 hours) or visit www.tfl.gov.uk

By train

Waterloo, Waterloo East, Victoria and Charing Cross are the nearest railway stations, and a 15–25 minute walk away. There are taxi ranks outside all these stations. For further information, please call National Rail Enquiries on. **03457 484950** or www.nationalrail.co.uk

By bicycle

Bicycle racks are located to the side of the main reception and next to the Florence Nightingale Museum on the lower ground level. Both areas are covered by CCTV.

By car

If you drive to St Thomas' you will need to pay the congestion charge. We have a car park but it has very limited spaces and charges apply (£3.20 per hour) at all times. Please make sure you have the correct change. Disabled parking is available to blue badge holders (please remember to bring your appointment card/letter with you). Since parking is limited please consider using other forms of transport to get to the hospital, or ask a friend or taxi to drop you off at our drop-off point outside the lower ground floor of Lambeth Wing.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns during your stay please speak to the nurse in charge. Alternatively, use the comments/suggestions box. You can also contact our PALS service on **020 7188 8803** or visit the PALS office on the ground floor of South Wing of St Thomas' Hospital.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

t: 020 7188 8801 (PALS) **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

t: 020 7188 3514 (complaints) **e:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and Accessible Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch:

t: 020 7188 8815 **e:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 111

NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

w: www.nhs.uk

Get involved and have your say: become a member of the Trust

Members of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust contribute to the organisation on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it is up to you how much you get involved. To find out more, and to become a member:

t: 0800 731 0319 **e:** members@gstt.nhs.uk **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership

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