



## St John's Institute of Dermatology

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# Severe eczema service

## Information for patients

This leaflet has been written to help you make the most of your first appointment at the severe eczema service. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a member of staff caring for you.

### How long should I allow for my visit?

We try to make the first visit to our service as comprehensive as possible, so your initial visit will be quite long - please allow up to **three hours**. Please feel free to apply treatment before coming to your hospital visit. We may need to do some investigations during your appointment, for example blood tests or skin swabs.

### Who should I call if I need to change my appointment?

Please call our patient access team on 020 7188 8884 and press option 3 to reschedule your appointment.

### What should I bring to my appointment?

We would be grateful if you could provide the following information during your consultation:

- details of investigations or treatments you have received in the past for your eczema
- details of all current medicines you take (for your eczema and any other medical condition) including topical creams, ointments and home remedies
- details of any allergies you are known to have
- details of past infections, including chickenpox, and any vaccinations you have received
- the names and contact details for any other specialists you see for your eczema or any other condition for which you receive hospital care.

### What should I expect from my visit?

After checking in at reception you will be given an electronic device and will be asked to fill in questionnaires about your eczema and how it affects your life. This data transfers automatically to your electronic patient record that the medical team will access during your clinic consultation. Please ask for assistance in completing the questions if required.

You will see one of our clinic nurses who will record your blood pressure, weight and may ask you to provide a urine sample.

Then you will see one of the dermatology doctors, and be reviewed by one of the senior consultants. They will ask you about your eczema and about previous treatments for your skin. They will then examine your skin and discuss a plan for further treatment with you. You will be asked to put a gown on over your underwear.

You will meet the clinical nurse specialist, with whom you can discuss your treatment plan, and the research nurses who may invite you to participate in research. Our team psychologist is also available to provide support for any psychological distress that you may have related to your eczema.

We will devise a treatment plan for you and where possible arrange for your treatment to be followed up by your local dermatologist. We are a teaching institution and there may be medical students and visiting doctors in attendance during your consultation.

## Will I be asked to participate in any research activities?

Research into eczema is an important activity in our department. We have nurses and doctors attached to our clinic who may invite you take part in research studies. These studies help to improve our knowledge about the cause and treatment for eczema. Participation in research is entirely voluntary and you are under no obligation to take part.

## Useful sources of information

### British Association of Dermatologists

**w:** [www.bad.org.uk/for-the-public/patient-information-leaflets](http://www.bad.org.uk/for-the-public/patient-information-leaflets)

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your appointment, please contact our Patient Pathway Assistant on 020 7188 0844 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm). Alternatively, please email any queries to **GSTT\_Eczema@nhs.net**.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://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](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

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

### **Language 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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:members@gstt.nhs.uk)    **w:** [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership)

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