

# **Your clinical genetics appointment**

**This leaflet is about your appointment with the clinical genetics service.**

**If you have questions about why you have been sent this information, please ask the doctor or nurse who referred you. You must ring to choose your appointment. Read your 'call to book' letter for details.**

## **What is genetic counselling?**

Some health conditions have a genetic cause or can run in families. If you know about a genetic condition in your family, you may have asked for an appointment with our service. Alternatively, a health professional can ask us to look for a genetic explanation for your (or a family member's) diagnosis.

## **Who can have a genetics assessment / appointment?**

Anyone who is concerned about an inherited or genetic condition in their family can be referred by a health professional to our clinic. In some cases more than one family member will be referred. We are happy to see family members together, but you have the option to be seen on your own. Please tell us your preferences and ring early to change or cancel an appointment.

## **Before your appointment**

We will send you a 'call to book' letter, asking you to ring and make your appointment. We may also send a family history information sheet. Please complete this and send it back to us as soon as possible. You can ask other family members for help in collecting the details.

Please also bring any medical or genetic information to the appointment, including treatment details and doctors' letters that might be useful in your assessment.

## What happens at an appointment?

At your appointment, you will see a specialist doctor or genetic counsellor. You may:

- find out if a genetic test is available
- have a genetic test result explained to you
- find out about managing different conditions
- discuss the chances of inheriting or passing on a condition
- find out if a genetic test is available during a pregnancy
- ask for support related to a diagnosis.

To answer these questions, we will ask you about your family and draw a family tree.

If relevant, we will give you information about any conditions in your family and explain how they are inherited, and discuss what a diagnosis means.

We may do an examination and take a blood sample. We will tell you how long tests take and contact you and the health professional who referred you with any test results.

We will write to you after your appointment so that you have a record of what was discussed and any plans that have been made.

Your appointment will last up to 45 minutes.

## **Where should I go?**

Once you have called to book your appointment, you will be sent an appointment letter. Read it carefully for directions.

Our main clinics are based at Guy's Hospital in central London and run Monday to Friday.

We see families from all over the south east of England (Kent, East Sussex and south-east London). We run a number of local clinics in some of these areas. Ask our appointments team if you can be seen in a clinic nearer to your home. In some cases, this will not be possible because your assessment needs specialist staff. If you are pregnant, or need to be seen quickly for another reason, the waiting list is usually shortest for our clinics at Guy's Hospital.

## **Does it cost anything?**

If you are referred by an NHS healthcare professional, the appointment and tests will not cost you anything.

## **King's Health Partners and research**

We have teamed up with other local hospitals, in a partnership known as King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. Your details may be shared with our partner hospitals so that you receive the best possible care. Information about you or your family is not shared elsewhere without your consent.

There may be a medical or genetic specialist observer at your appointment. We will ask if this is all right with you. You will also be offered an opportunity to enrol in research programmes.

## **Useful sources of information**

### **Genetic Alliance UK**

A national charity working to improve the lives of patients and families affected by all types of genetic conditions. They are an alliance of over 180 patient organisations and have information leaflets about genetics which you may find interesting and useful.

**w:** [www.geneticalliance.org.uk](http://www.geneticalliance.org.uk)

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)

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about our service, please contact us on 020 7188 1364 (Monday to Friday, 8.30am-4.30pm).

### Address:

7th floor, Borough Wing  
Guy's Hospital  
Great Maze Pond  
London SE1 9RT

## 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-5pm, Monday to Friday

## Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS.

**t:** 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas'

**t:** 020 7188 8803 at Guy's **e:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

## Language Support Services

**t:** 020 7188 8815 **fax:** 020 7188 5953

## 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)

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