

Patient blood management

Pre-operative anaemia management

During your clinic visit today you will be having blood taken for various tests. It is routine practice to complete these tests, and as part of our pre-operative anaemia management we will be able to identify if you are anaemic and offer appropriate treatment prior to your surgery.

What is anaemia?

Anaemia is when you have fewer red blood cells in your blood than normal. The red blood cells contain a protein called haemoglobin which is responsible for carrying oxygen around the body. In anaemia, the haemoglobin is lower than normal. Anaemia can lead to various symptoms, the most common being:

- pale skin
- tiredness
- dizziness
- lack of concentration
- shortness of breath
- inflammation of the tongue
- new or worsening angina
- slow or poor wound healing.

What causes anaemia?

- lack of iron in your diet or the inability to absorb it
- bleeding from the stomach or bowel
- coeliac disease
- heavy periods
- bone marrow deficiencies
- increased alcohol intake
- lack of vitamins such as B12 and folate
- chronic kidney disease
- regular blood donations

Why is this important to me?

First, being anaemic may lead to you experiencing one or more of the above symptoms which may impact on your daily life. Identifying that you have anaemia means that we can develop a management plan to offer you treatment where appropriate.

Iron deficiency anaemia (IDA) is the most common type of anaemia and can be treated by increasing your intake of iron in your diet, oral iron tablets or via a drip into a vein.

If your surgery is likely to be performed soon we may offer intravenous (through a small tube into a vein) iron as a treatment if you are found to have IDA. Being anaemic also increases your chance of requiring a blood transfusion during your hospital stay, and the risk of post-operative complications.

What happens next?

Your blood results will be reviewed by the pre-operative management team. If you do not hear from us then you are not anaemic and therefore no treatment will be required and you should attend any other appointments as planned to prepare for your surgery.

If you are anaemic you will be informed of this and a plan for treatment advised.

Contact us

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

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