

Your outpatient visit to St Thomas'

This information leaflet tells you about some of the things you need to do before your visit to the hospital and should be read alongside your appointment letter which will tell you:

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

We look forward to welcoming you to our hospital.

As soon as you can after receiving your appointment letter, don't forget to:

- Check the appointment details and contact us if you can't make the date. If you don't attend and don't let us know, you may be discharged from our care back to your GP.
- Make sure we have your mobile number so we can text you reminders.
- Read the checklist on page 3 so you can start planning for your hospital visit.
- Call 020 7188 8815 or email languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk if you need an interpreter or signer and one wasn't booked when you arranged your appointment.

In line with the NHS Constitution, you can expect to be treated within 18 weeks of referral to hospital by your GP. You can help us to ensure that you are treated as quickly as possible by following the list of actions above. For more information about the NHS Constitution and your rights as a patient, visit www.nhs.uk/choiceintheNHS/Rightsandpledges/NHSConstitution

About your visit

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.

We will make every effort to see you as near to your appointment time as possible. We can't always predict how long your appointment will take and delays can sometimes happen. Please allow plenty of time for your appointment and if necessary, make suitable arrangements at home before you come to hospital.

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 visit.

Your medical team

In most cases you will be seen by a consultant (senior doctor) or a member of their medical team. However, depending on your needs, you might be seen by other healthcare professionals too.

St Thomas' is a teaching hospital and so we may have nursing or other students working in the clinic under close supervision. If you do not want to be seen by students please tell us – it will not affect your care in any way.

St Thomas' is also a major centre for health research, developing future treatments and care. You might be asked to take part in a study. The researcher will explain the study in detail to you, including its aims, why you would be suitable to take part and what it will involve. If you decide you would like to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you do not want to take part your care will not be affected in any way.

Involving you in your care

We want to involve you in all the decisions about your treatment and care. Please tell us;

- if you need us to explain something more clearly
- if you need any extra help
- if you feel staff could involve you more in discussions
- if you have any fears or worries
- if you wish to get a second opinion.

If you decide to go ahead with a procedure or treatment, you will be asked to sign a consent form. This confirms that you agree to have the procedure or treatment, and that you understand what it involves.

Before your appointment

Taking a list of questions that you'd like to ask your healthcare professional can help you to get the most out of your appointment. Before you leave your appointment, make sure you know:

- What might be wrong
- Whether you need any tests
- What treatment is best for you
- What happens next and who to contact

You can find a list of suggested questions to ask and other tips on getting the most out of your appointment on our website at www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/beforeyouleave. If you would like us to send you a paper copy of these hints and tips please call the Knowledge and Information Centre on **020 7188 3416**.

Checklist

Before you leave home, please check you have:

- planned your journey to St Thomas' Hospital, see section on planning your journey below.
- your appointment letter and any other information we have sent you
- all of the medicines that you are currently taking or using, 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
- a small amount of money in case you need to buy a drink, snack or something to read
- information about any change in your personal details, for example if you have a new address or a new GP
- proof of entitlement to free prescriptions
- proof of entitlement to free travel (see the **Help with travel costs** section below for details)
- a list of questions you would like to ask during your appointment (see above)
- any samples requested by your doctor or nurse.

Your confidentiality

We take your confidentiality extremely seriously. To make sure we give the most effective treatment and care, we hold records on all of our patients, including their names, addresses, telephone number and medical history. Your information is shared only with those who need to provide your care, including your GP (unless you ask us not to do so). Please speak to a member of staff if you would like to see, or have copies of, your health records.

Your medicines

If you need to start new medicines we will give you a letter for your GP explaining what needs to be prescribed. If you need new medicines urgently you will be asked to collect these from the hospital pharmacy. We will give you directions to the pharmacy.

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 to clean your hands when entering and leaving the clinic. If the hand rub has run out please let a member of staff know.

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**.

Facilities

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

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).

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 Guy's and St Thomas' are suitable for wheelchairs. There are accessible toilets in key locations around both hospitals, including the main reception areas. Induction loops are available in the main reception. Material in a format accessible to you can sometimes also be provided. Guide dogs may accompany you during your visit, but please give our staff as much notice as possible so they can accommodate this. Please call the number on your appointment letter.

Travelling to St Thomas'

Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7EH

t: 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.

Further sources of information

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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