

Your IBD virtual clinic appointment



Why am I going to be reviewed in the IBD Virtual Clinic?

After consultation with you at your last clinic or telephone appointment, you have been discharged to the IBD Virtual clinic (IBD VC) because your inflammatory bowel disease is stable or because you are in remission. This clinic has replaced the Annual Review telephone clinic. A recent audit of the Annual Review clinic suggested that 25% of patients could not be contacted at their allotted date and time and 50% were in remission and required no advice or change in treatment. This has led us to offer an alternative way of reviewing your care, allowing us to spend more time caring for you when you are unwell.

How will I be reviewed?

A month before your annual review date, we will send a letter asking you to get your monitoring bloods taken (if appropriate) and **most importantly**, to contact us to let us know if you are still well (ie in remission) or whether your condition is no longer stable (ie you are having a relapse). **You must contact us by telephone, letter or email.** If you email us, please check our email address carefully.

The following month, an experienced IBD nurse will:

- review your notes
- check your monitoring bloods (we can access all bloods your GP sends to the hospital)
- check whether your colonoscopy surveillance is due.

If you have contacted us to tell us that you are well, we will then write to your GP confirming that your virtual annual review has been completed. We will also ensure any necessary surveillance is booked by liaising with the endoscopy booking office.

If your monitoring bloods are outside of expected limits, or if you indicate when you contact us that you are not well, the booking office will send you a telephone appointment.

What should I do if I am unwell?

If you are experiencing a flare-up of your disease, please contact the IBD nurses via the IBD Helpline on 01872 252178. Don't wait for the annual review appointment if you are unwell.

What will happen if I don't get my bloods taken or contact you to confirm I am well?

In this case, we will write to your GP asking him or her to contact you and arrange for you to have your bloods taken and assess your condition. You will get a copy of the letter. Patients who fulfil certain criteria (such as those with limited disease who do not require colonoscopy surveillance) could be permanently discharged to their GP.

Is virtual review suitable for everyone?

If you are unwell, you must contact the IBD nurses.

If you are taking any form of immunosuppression (eg Azathioprine, Mercaptopurine, Methotrexate, Infliximab, Adalimumab) or Sulphasalazine, virtual review is **not** suitable. Please contact the IBD nurses if this is the case.

If you are pregnant, you must contact the IBD nurses as soon as possible.

Can I still get advice?

You can still get advice (for example dietary, constipation, lifestyle, pregnancy planning, alternative remedies, continence advice etc) at any point by telephoning the IBD helpline. Our contact details are on the back of this leaflet.

Further information and support

Crohn's and Colitis UK is a national support group which has plenty of useful information about ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease. They offer information sheets on a variety of topics which can be printed from their website or sent to you.

Crohn's and Colitis UK

Website: www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk

Tel: 0300 222 5700

There is a local mid and west Cornwall branch of this group which meets 3-4 times a year in the Knowledge Spa at RCHT. Further details can be found on their website or from the IBD helpline.

Website: www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/local-group/south-west/mid-west-cornwall

Contact us

The IBD nurses are in the hospital Monday – Friday (except for bank holidays) and can be contacted on 01872 252178. There is an answer phone facility if we are unable to take your call. Please speak clearly, leaving your full name, date of birth (or hospital number), telephone number and short message. We aim to get back to you by the following working day, but if you feel your call is urgent, please let us know.

You can also contact us via email – this is our preferred method of communication if you are contacting us to let us know that you are well.

Email: rch-tr.IBDnurse@nhs.net

Tel: 01872 252178

You are also welcome to write to us at:

IBD Nurses
Admin Corridor
Gastroenterology Dept
Royal Cornwall Hospital
Truro
TR1 3LJ

Outpatient Booking Office

If you have a query regarding any hospital appointment, please contact the medical booking office on 01872 253300.

Endoscopy Department

If you need to contact the endoscopy department about any future colonoscopy appointment, please telephone 01872 252855.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service is also available for general enquiries or concerns. PALS can be contacted by phoning 01872 252793 on weekdays between 9:00 am and 4:30 pm or by leaving a message at weekends or in the evenings.

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version
or in another language, please contact the General Office on
01872 252690

