

Having a general anaesthetic

Cornwall Bowel Cancer Screening

What happens if I need a general anaesthetic?

If you need a general anaesthetic (GA) for a bowel cancer screening procedure, you should be aware that it can remain in your system for up to 24 hours and may cause drowsiness and forgetfulness.

Therefore:

- you need somebody to drive you home
- you need somebody to stay with you at home for a minimum of 12 hours
- do not drink alcohol
- do not make important decisions
- **do not** drive or operate machinery for 24 hours (for insurance reasons)
- you may wish to have a relative or friend with you following the colonoscopy when the results are discussed.

In the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme, for safety reasons a general anaesthetic will only be performed in the Endoscopy department at Royal Cornwall Hospital, Truro.

Please follow the separate instructions regarding bowel preparation and fasting. (As a guide: a minimum of 6 hours for food and 6 hours for fluids).

What happens if I live alone?

If you are not able to arrange somebody to stay with you, you will need to have an early morning appointment and stay for a longer period in the Endoscopy Unit. You will then be transferred to the discharge lounge until you are safe to be discharged home alone.

If this is the case please let us know as we may need to rearrange your appointment to accommodate this.

What happens if I need transport?

It is **not** advisable to travel long distances by public transport because of the **effects of the bowel preparation, the anaesthetic and the possible 'windy' discomfort following colonoscopy.**

If you are not able to arrange your transport to the hospital with family or friends there are various different patient transport services available.

Transport Access Patients (TAPs) 01872 223388 – a small charge per mile is payable. If you are in receipt of certain benefits and require financial help with your transport you can claim your expenses, either when you attend for the test or by post within 3 months.

There are various different community transport schemes throughout Cornwall – please contact the General Office at Royal Cornwall Hospital on 01872 252690. They will be able to advise you of your best option. Details are also available on the Community Transport Schemes page of the Cornwall Council website and are regularly updated.

If you have any problems arranging transport please let us know us and we will discuss it with you.

Contact us

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact us:

Cornwall Bowel Cancer Screening Centre

Tel: 01872 252076

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