

Nurse led telephone follow up clinic and Patient initiated follow up



Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet is for patients who have completed treatment for a gynaecological cancer. It explains what Patient initiated follow up and Nurse led follow up clinics are and how they may benefit you. It also explains what symptoms to look out for and aims to answer some common questions you may have.

What is nurse led follow up?

Following your treatment for cancer, you have the option to be followed up by the Gynaecological Oncology Nurse Specialist, to support you in your ongoing recovery. This follow up is undertaken by telephone on either a Tuesday or Thursday afternoon, and you will not need to attend the hospital.

What are the benefits?

We have looked at ways of improving our service to you and there is no evidence to suggest that attending a clinic has any benefits over a telephone based review. Benefits of nurse led follow up include:

- avoiding further hospital visits may reduce anxiety that is often experienced around attending for a consultation
- being followed up by your nurse specialist provides continuity for you
- you have the opportunity to discuss any issues that you may be concerned about regarding your general wellbeing
- by covering nursing issues as well as clinical issues we aim to provide you with a holistic approach to your care.

What is patient initiated follow up? (PIFU)

You may decide that routine follow up causes you worry and may prefer to opt out of this. Patient initiated follow up allows you to manage your own follow up appointments if and when you need them over your five year surveillance period.

What are the benefits?

- being in control of your own care and getting help when you need it
- continued access to your nurse specialist who will facilitate appointments when appropriate
- peace of mind without the need to travel or take time off work.

How do I book a follow up appointment?

Your Clinical Nurse specialist will have given you their telephone number to use. When you call us please leave your name, date of birth and tell us that you are on PIFU. Your Clinical Nurse Specialist will return your call and assess your symptoms of concern.

What symptoms should I look out for?

There are common symptoms that can occur if your cancer returns. It is important to remember that we can all experience some of these symptoms from time to time, and it does not necessarily mean that your cancer has returned.

Depending on the site of your cancer and the treatment you received, symptoms may include:

- vaginal bleeding/discharge
- bloating
- persistent pelvic/tummy pains
- bowel or bladder symptoms
- unexplained weight loss/appetite changes
- persistent tiredness
- swelling in your legs.

It is important for you to know that very few cancer recurrences are picked up at a clinic appointment alone – it is more likely that you will know if your cancer has come back due to symptoms that you are experiencing.

What does the follow up involve?

The nurse will have a series of relevant questions to ask you which will indicate if there are any issues that need to be addressed.

If there are any concerns raised during your telephone follow up you can be reassured that you will have rapid access to a consultant appointment within a week. Any tests or investigations necessary will be requested during this time to avoid any delays.

How frequently will I be called?

For the 1st year, you will be called every 3-6 months. In the 2nd year, you will be called every 6 months, and then less frequently for up to 5 years.

Can I choose when I will be called?

We will arrange a mutually agreeable date and time at your previous call or appointment.

How long should I allow for the call?

Please allow around 15 minutes for the call.

Can I contact the nurse between telephone appointments?

Yes, you will still be able to call the nurse specialist at any time between follow up appointments if you have any concerns.

Contact us

Gynaecology Nurse Specialists

Emma Dyer / Melissa Moyle

Tel: 01872 252037

Mobile: 0785 863690 (for non urgent text enquiries)

Further information

The following web sites provide useful information and support:

Ovacome OvarianCancer

www.ovacome.org.uk

Ovarian Cancer Action

www.ovarian.org.uk

Ovarian Cancer

www.targetovarian.org.uk

Gynaecological Cancer Research Fund

www.eveappeal.org.uk

Cervical Cancer

www.jostrust.org.uk

Vulval Awareness Campaign

www.vaco.co.uk

Macmillan Cancer Support

www.macmillan.org.uk

Cancer Research UK

www.cancerresearchuk.org

Falmouth Based Charity

www.pantsmatters.org.uk

Support Group

www.falcancersupport.org.uk

Gynae Cancer Support Group

Regular meetings run by the CNS team. For more information please contact the CNS office on: 01872 252037

Facebook Group:

'Cornwall Gynae Cancer Support Group' and ask to be added as this is a closed and confidential group.

and:

www.gogirlssupport.org

www.mysunrise.co.uk

www.eveappeal.org.uk

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



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