HPB one-stop clinic

Information for patients
This leaflet answers common questions about the HPB one-stop clinic. If you would like further information, or have any particular worries, please do not hesitate to contact the HPB team using the telephone numbers at the end of this leaflet.

In most cases it will be possible for a friend or relative to accompany you for your visit to the one-stop clinic.

What is the HPB department?
You have been referred to the HPB (hepato-pancreatobiliary) service because you have a problem with your pancreas, liver, gall bladder or bile duct which may require surgery. The Royal Free Hospital is a specialist HPB centre which performs these types of complex operations regularly and this is why you have been asked to come here rather than your local hospital.

What is the HPB one-stop clinic?
Due to the distance you may have to travel to get here, we have set up a ‘one-stop clinic’ to try to reduce the number of visits you have to make to the hospital. This should also reduce the time that you have to wait for an operation.

What can I expect in the clinic?
You may need to have a few tests during your clinic visit to help us diagnose your problem and decide on whether surgery would be appropriate for you.

What tests will I have?
You will receive a phone call inviting you to the HPB one-stop clinic from a member of the team. They will tell you what tests and appointments have been planned for the day. Below is a description of some of the tests that you may have in the clinic.

**Blood tests: Location – ground floor**
You may need to have additional blood tests. These will either be done first thing or during your pre-assessment appointment. You will be advised if you need to go to the blood room before you have your other appointments.

**CT scan: Location – imaging department, ground floor**
CT scan (or CAT scan) stands for computerised (axial) tomography scan. This scan takes a series of x-rays and uses a computer to put them together. The scan is painless.

The CT machine takes pictures of your body from different angles and gives a series of cross sections (slices) through the part of the body being scanned. A very detailed picture of the inside of the body can be built up in this way.

Together, these cross sections give a very accurate picture of where an abnormal area, such as a tumour, is and how big it is. They also show how close the area
that needs to be treated or operated on is to major body organs.

A CT scanning machine is large and doughnut-shaped. You will be asked to lie down on a couch. The couch can slowly slide backwards and forwards through the hole of the doughnut. The pictures are taken as you move through the machine.

You can read more about having a CT scan here: www.royalfree.nhs.uk/services/services-a-z/radiology/#tab-patient-leaflets

**MRI scan: Location – imaging department, ground floor**

MRI scans use a very powerful magnet. It is completely painless, but the scanner is very noisy. MRI scans can show up soft tissues very clearly and a single scan can produce many pictures from angles all around the body. The pictures can be affected by movement, so they aren’t used very often for some tumours because coughing, swallowing or breathing will make the scan less clear.

The MRI scanner is a large cylinder with a couch that can move backwards and forwards through the cylinder. The pictures are taken inside the cylinder. The MRI is in a protected room to keep out radio waves as these interfere with the scan.
You can read more about having an MRI scan here: www.royalfree.nhs.uk/services/services-a-z/radiology/#tab-patient-leaflets

**Who will I see in clinic?**
You will be seen by a HPB consultant or senior registrar and by your assigned clinical nurse specialist (CNS).

**How long should I expect to be at the hospital?**
When you come to the one-stop clinic, you may have more than one appointment on the day – you should allow a full day for your visit. We plan to do all your tests in one day, however please note, sometimes this may not be possible.

**What do I need to bring to the clinic?**
Please bring along anything that will help us to understand your problem better, for example a list of current medicines (including those prescribed by your GP, medicines you have bought yourself or alternative medicines such as herbal remedies), and copies of any clinic investigations or discharge letters that you have.

**Who do I need to bring to the clinic?**
You do not have to bring anyone with you to the clinic, but it is advisable for you to bring a relative or friend with you for support and to help you remember things and ask questions at the appointment with your consultant. They may be asked to wait outside if you are having scans.
**Will I have to wait?**
As this is a one-stop clinic, most patients will need to have tests as well as an appointment with the doctor. This usually requires some waiting.

As a specialist service, we treat a large number of patients and all of our clinics are very busy. Patients are seen in order of their appointment time so arriving early will not mean that you are seen early. We will try to keep you informed about waiting times at regular intervals. Please speak to the clinic staff if you require more information or have concerns about waiting times.

**How long will I have to wait for an appointment?**
We try to see patients within two weeks of receiving a referral letter. You need to be referred by a doctor or a clinical nurse specialist – we are unable to accept self-referrals.

**Pre-operative assessment: Location – 1st floor**
If you need to have surgery you will usually be offered a pre-operative assessment appointment on the same day. This is a routine appointment with the anaesthetic team to discuss any health problems you may have had previously and to check that you are fit for surgery.

Please note that if you have been seen by another specialist at a different hospital (for example a cardiologist) and have copies of clinic investigations or discharge letters, please bring these with you. This will
allow us to make a fuller assessment of your medical condition. However if you do not have copies please do not worry as we will be able to obtain these after your appointment.

Is there any food or drink available?
Water is available in the clinic. You can also visit the following shops and cafes which are located within the hospital grounds:

- Glass café (located outside the main entrance to the hospital on the ground floor) – they sell light refreshments, snacks and drinks.

- WHSmiths (located on the ground floor) – they sell newspapers, magazines, light refreshments and cold drinks.

- M&S café (located on the ground floor) – they sell hot and cold food and drinks.

- Foodhouse restaurant (located on the lower ground floor) – can be found by following the corridor from the hospital reception to the main lifts. They sell a variety of hot and cold food and drinks. There is also a Costa Coffee at the back of the restaurant.

Please check your fasting instructions before eating or drinking (particularly if you have been asked to have a CT or MRI scan).
If you decide to leave the clinic, please let the receptionist know so that you do not miss your appointment.

**Do you have any further questions?**
Please contact the HPB team by calling 020 7794 0500, followed extension 38895, 31316 or 31318.

**Other useful contacts**
**HPB department**
- HPB waiting list team: 020 7794 0500 ext 31317/33244
- HPB CNS team: RF-TR.RF-HPBCNS@nhs.net
- Website: www.royalfree.nhs.uk/services/services-a-z/liver-services

**Radiology (imaging) appointments**
- Phone: 020 7830 2036
- Email: rf.radiologyenquiries@nhs.net

This leaflet is also available in large print. If you need this leaflet in another format – for example Braille, a language other than English or audio – please ask a member of staff.

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