



Making the most of your GP visit

It can be hard to remember everything you want to say once you are with your GP. Taking along a few notes will help you tell them what they need to know about your condition. This information will help your GP decide if you need any tests or a referral to a consultant.

Your Symptoms

Thinking about your symptoms, what are they? Which ones bother you the most?

It might be useful to think about some of the following details:

- How long have you been suffering with your symptoms?
- How regularly do you have them? Is there a pattern?
- Has anyone in your family had similar symptoms or related conditions?
- Do you have any concerns related to your symptoms you would like to discuss?

Your Diagnosis

If your GP needs to refer you for tests or to a consultant, here are some questions you may want to ask:

- What do you think might be the problem?
- What are the next steps?
- What will the test results tell you?
- When do you expect the test results back?
 - Do I need to make an appointment to get the results?
- How can I find out more about the treatment, tests or consultant that have been recommended?
- Are there any alternatives to the treatment or how I get it?
- When will I see the consultant or have the tests?
- Where will I see the consultant or have the tests?

What are my options if I can't have my treatment on the NHS or I want it quicker?

Some operations are no longer available through the NHS, or are restricted or have long delays. If you are not eligible or you do not want to wait for treatment, you may want to discuss alternative options for accessing the care you need with your GP.

Paying for treatment yourself

There are five steps you need to take when considering paying for treatment out of your own money:

1. Getting a referral

Most medical treatments start with a referral to a consultant from your GP. However you can self-refer for a number of treatments and book appointments directly with the hospital of your choice.

2. Seeing the consultant

Your consultant will, in consultation with you, decide the best course of treatment for your condition and personal circumstances. It is important to ask relevant questions about the treatment options available to you.

3. Find out the full cost of the treatment

If you are thinking of paying for your own treatment, it is important to find out all of the costs.

We have a comprehensive price list that is clear about what is and isn't included. The list includes popular medical and surgical procedures as well as those that are not available, restricted or that have long waiting times on the NHS.

These are available at www.bmihealthcare.co.uk/self-pay, or you can call Freephone ONECALL number **0800 142 2316** to speak to someone straight away.

4. Arranging treatment

Your consultant will advise when and where you are able to have the treatment you require. Whether you require a simple outpatient procedure or need major surgery you should be able to access treatment with very little waiting time.

5. Paying for treatment

You can pay for your treatment in a variety of ways including cash, cheque, credit or debit card.

Using private medical insurance

If you have private medical insurance – either your own policy, a family policy or as part of a company scheme – you may want to discuss this option with your GP.

There are five steps you need to take when considering using private medical insurance:

1. Check you're covered

Before you receive any treatment privately, call your insurer and they will give you all the guidance you need to confirm you are covered and if necessary send you a claims form.

2. Getting a referral

Most medical treatments start with a referral to a consultant from your GP. This may involve your GP signing a claim form. Some GP surgeries charge a small fee for this service which is not covered by your insurance.

3. Seeing the consultant

Your consultant, in consultation with you, will decide the best course of treatment for your condition and personal circumstances. It is important to ask relevant questions about the treatment options available to you. Remember to stay in contact with your insurer to confirm that your treatment is covered.

4. Arranging treatment

Your consultant will advise when and where you are able to have the treatment you require. Whether you require a simple outpatient procedure or need major surgery you should be able to access treatment with very little waiting time.

5. Who pays the bill?

Most hospitals and some consultants will send their bill to your insurer, but others will send the bill directly to you. Your insurance company will tell you how they will pay your claim.