

Two week wait referral (2ww):

What does this mean for me?

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at ndht.pals@nhs.net.

Why has my GP referred me via a two week wait referral (2ww) and what does this mean?

The two week wait referral system allows a patient with symptoms that may indicate an underlying cancer to be seen as quickly as possible. Your GP may refer you because they are concerned about your symptoms and require a specialist opinion to exclude cancer.

GPs are able to diagnose and treat many problems, though may feel they need to refer you to hospital as:

- Your symptoms need further investigation
- The investigation(s) already performed appear abnormal
- They would like to exclude cancer

What happens next?

Once the hospital receives your referral, it is likely to be reviewed (triaged) by a member of the clinical team to ensure the right appointment is made for you. This may include an investigation such as an x-ray, CT scan or other tests depending on the type of referral, or an outpatient appointment for an initial assessment by one of the specialist consultants.

The hospital will contact you, either by telephone or letter, to offer you an appointment and further instructions should you be required to go for an investigation.

Will I require any tests?

Depending on the type of referral, it may be appropriate to have a test as your first appointment. If this happens, the hospital will send you an appointment along with any instructions that are relevant to the test advised. It may be a good idea to take somebody with you to this test.

If you are seen in the outpatient department, it is possible that a test may be carried out here to help the specialist understand the cause of your symptoms.

Does this mean I have cancer?

A large number of patients referred via the **two week wait** system do not have cancer, though it is important that you see a specialist as soon as possible to confirm or exclude the possibility of a cancer diagnosis. This will allow treatment to commence earlier if required.

What can I do to help?

- Inform the GP at the time of referral if you are not available for the next two weeks. This will allow the GP practice to hold your referral until you become available and enable the hospital to offer you a suitable appointment.
- When the hospital team contacts you to offer an appointment within the next two weeks, do your best to fit in with the time being offered.
- Ensure your GP practice has your correct address and contact details (daytime telephone and mobile numbers).
- If you have any questions you would like to bring to the appointment, please feel free to do so.
- Coming to hospital can be a stressful time and you are welcome to bring a family member or friend with you.

I haven't received an appointment. What do I do?

If you have not received details of your appointment within three working days of seeing your GP and being referred, please contact your GP practice who will be able to assist.

What if I need to change the appointment?

If you are unable to make the appointment offered by the hospital, please let them know as soon as possible. By alerting the hospital at the earliest possible time, they will be able to offer you another appointment and also use your time slot for another patient.

It is in your best interests to attend your appointment so cancer can be excluded or, if required, further investigations can be requested to look into your symptoms.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

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