

Information about your medicines

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.

This leaflet explains how we will deal with your medicines following an admission to hospital, during your stay and on discharge. It is important we have full information about your medicines so we can make sure you get the **right treatment** and the **right dose** at the **right time**.

Coming into hospital

When you come into hospital, please bring with you all the medicines you are currently taking and your repeat slip, or an up-to-date list of your medication. This includes medicines that have been prescribed by your GP and anything else that you currently take (e.g. those that you have bought yourself).

They may include:

- Tablets, capsules, liquids and powders
- Creams and ointments
- Eye/ear/nose drops
- Inhalers and nebulisers
- Contraceptive pills or hormone replacement therapy
- Patches, such as nicotine replacement therapy patches
- Suppositories or pessaries
- Injections
- Herbal or homeopathic remedies
- Vitamins and supplements
- Medicines used to help you sleep
- Any booklets or other information that you use to monitor your medication (e.g. treatment cards or booklets you have been given with your medication – your anticoagulant / warfarin booklet, steroid card, lithium card etc.)

If you receive your medicines in a blister pack or pill box, please bring it with you.

Why we need to know about the medicines you are taking

It is important that we have a complete picture of the medicines you are taking so that:

- We can check the nature and strength of the medicines you are taking
- We can continue to prescribe those medicines while you are in hospital and avoid you missing a dose
- We can make sure that when you leave the hospital you have enough of the medicines you need
- We can remove and dispose of any medicines you no longer require
- It can help speed up the discharge process
- We can help you to use your medicines safely

Do not take any other medicines while you are an in-patient without letting the hospital staff know first.

Important: If you are allergic or sensitive to any medicines, or have specific medication needs, please let the hospital staff know as soon as you or your carer are able to.

What if I forget to bring my medicines with me?

Ask a relative or friend to bring your medicines in if they are able to visit you in hospital, together with a list of your medication from your GP surgery if available.

If visiting is restricted due to COVID-19, medicines can be brought to the drop-off points.

If you are staying at North Devon District Hospital:
Drop-off Station, Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) office, level 2
Monday – Friday, 9am – 3.30pm (exclude Bank Holidays)

If you are staying at South Molton Hospital:
Main reception desk (please call 01769 572164 for opening hours)

If this is not possible, we will provide the medicines you need during your stay. This may involve making some changes, especially if the hospital does not routinely stock any of your medication.

During your stay

A pharmacist, pharmacy technician or nurse will check your medicines with you. To keep them safe, they will be locked away either in the bedside locker or a designated medicines cupboard on the ward.

If you have any specific questions about your medicines, and would like to speak to a member of the pharmacy team, please let a member of staff know. The ward pharmacist, pharmacy technician, nurse or doctor will be able to help you and give you information about the medicines you are taking.

During your stay, your medicines will be given to you by a registered professional working on the ward. If you would like to take your medicines yourself, please ask about the possibility of self-administering your medicines.

If you require any of your medicines to be taken or given at specific times, such as medication for Parkinson's Disease, please let a member of staff know about your specific medication needs, as our aim is to give your medicines to you on time, every time.

Understanding your medicines

It is important that you or your carer are fully aware of the medicines you are being given and understand what they are for. If you or your carer notice there has been a change in dose or medication, please tell a member of the ward or pharmacy team.

Sometimes the hospital may give you a different manufacturer's brand of your medicine, which may not look the same as your usual medicine. If you have any concerns, speak to the doctor, practitioner looking after you or a member of the pharmacy team.

When you leave hospital

We will supply any medicines that you need when you leave.

You will be shown:

- how to take your medicines
- informed of any common side effects, and
- how to store your medicines safely.

Your medicines will also include a 'patient information leaflet' to remind you of the information provided before you leave.

We will send an updated list of your current medicines to your GP. We will also give you a copy of your discharge letter (which includes a list of your current medicines) for your community pharmacy to update their records.

Hospital staff will ask your permission to safely dispose of any medication that you no longer need. If you have any old medicines at home, please take them to your local pharmacy for disposal.

Checklist (to complete before you leave hospital)

- Ask about changes made to your medicines in hospital.
- Make sure you know which medicines have been stopped. Do not restart them at home unless advised to do so by your doctor.
- Ask if you need an information leaflet for any of your newly prescribed or regular medicines.
- Ask about commonly experienced or expected side effects of your medication.
- Make sure you have enough of all the medicines listed on your discharge letter.

- Make sure you know how much of each medicine you need to take and when to take it. If you are not sure, please ask for advice.
- Make sure you have been given a copy of your discharge letter to give to your community pharmacy.
- Make sure you have enough bandages, dressings and appliances.
- Make sure you have a date for your next appointment and/or blood test and an appointment card for follow-up visits, particularly if you are taking a blood-thinning drug (anticoagulant) such as warfarin.

What support is there after I leave hospital?

Your local pharmacy will be able to give you advice and support after you leave the hospital, such as the Discharge Medicines Service (DMS). This service is confidential, and you will be able to talk to your community pharmacist in a private area in the pharmacy about your medicines.

If you experience any side effects from your medication, please speak to your pharmacist or GP who can advise you what to do (do not stop taking your medication without discussing with your pharmacist or GP first).

If you experience any unexpected effects from your medication, you may wish to report these to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), which can be done via their website: <https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>

Remember to re-order your medicines from your GP after you have left hospital, if you need an on-going supply. Please only order supplies of the medicines you need, to reduce unnecessary waste.

Questions you may wish to ask about your medicines

- What is this medicine for?
- When and how should I take / use it?
- How long should I take this medicine for?
- Are there any foods or drinks that I should avoid while I'm taking this medicine?
- How will I know this medicine is working?
- What do I do if I miss a dose?
- What are the possible side effects?
- What should I do if I think I have side effects?
- Are there any medicines I need to stop taking?

Further information

Please ask to speak to the ward pharmacist or pharmacy technician if you have any questions or want to know more about your medicines.

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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