

PATIENT INFORMATION

Ocular Surgery or Minor Eye Procedure COVID-19 during COVID-19 Pandemic

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new type of coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) and it is an important issue to consider when choosing whether to have surgery or not. Opting to have an operation will involve at least one, two or more visits to the hospital before, during and after surgery. In the majority of people, COVID-19 causes a mild, self-limiting illness. However, some people get a more severe form of the disease. We are taking all the recommended precautions to reduce the risk of catching COVID-19. However, **it is not possible to guarantee a zero risk of catching COVID-19 during any of your visits.** You need to discuss and balance the theoretical small risk of contracting COVID-19 with the real risks to you of not treating your eye condition. This could be discussed with your doctor.

You may wish to delay your operation, and we would understand your reasons for this. However future dates for surgery may take much longer than normal to arrange. You may also be taken off the waiting list and asked to contact your optician or GP when you are ready to have surgery.

Torbay Hospital will do everything we can to provide your surgery at this time. The coronavirus pandemic is however placing significant demands on the entire health service. This form is to make you aware that your surgical care may be affected in a number of ways.

These are examples of the ways in which your surgical care may be different to normal:

Before your operation

- Most of your consultations will occur by telephone or by email and letter.
- We may also ask you to email or post medical information to us.
- Your anaesthetic assessment may be by telephone with a nurse, and possibly an anaesthetist too. It is possible that you may need a face to face appointment.
- We will arrange for you to have coronavirus testing before your operation.
- Your operation would be likely to be postponed if you test positive or are unwell. Please inform us if you develop any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Routinely, we will ask you go into strict isolation for 14 days before a procedure unless it is an emergency. You will be given clear information about this on your pre-assessment consultation.

Your operation

- To support screening for COVID-19, on entering we will be asking everyone to report any symptoms of COVID-19 such as a new continuous cough, high temperature (above 37.8) or a loss or change to the sense of smell or taste. Any patient reporting or displaying any symptoms of COVID-19, will be asked to return home and the surgery will be postponed.
- Wards will be reorganised, and staff will be wearing protective equipment.
- It is likely you will not be able to have your family and friends visit whilst in hospital. All this is to protect the safety of you, other members of the public and staff.

After your operation

- You will be discharged from hospital when you are ready, or may be moved elsewhere to a 'step-down' unit to complete your recovery.
- You may be discharged directly to your optician or GP.
- If further appointments in the eye clinic are needed this will be arranged. We may check on you by telephone.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation, and apologise for any inconvenience caused.

For more information:

- www.gov.uk/coronavirus
- <https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/about-us/news-and-publications/information-leaflets/ophthalmology/> or search for internet 'Torbay Hospital Ophthalmology Information Leaflets'
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cataract-surgery/>

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.