

COUNSELLING A PATIENT ABOUT UNDERGOING AN OPERATION OR A TEST

Recommendations for Consultants and Nurses

1) Amend your consent process in the context of COVID-19:

- Ensure that the patient understands the risks associated with COVID-19 and has given informed consent
- Explain to patients that their planned care is likely to be postponed if they:
 - Test positive for SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19)
 - Develop symptoms of COVID-19
 - Are not clinically well enough
 - Need to self-isolate after contact with someone with COVID-19 (for example, as identified by the NHS Test and Trace system).

2) You must assess individual risk, taking into account three sets of factors:

- **Individual factors:** associated with an increased risk of getting or becoming severely ill with COVID-19, such as age (risk increases as someone gets older), being a man, where in the country one lives, being from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background, living in a care home or hospice, living in multi-generational, shared accommodation, and having certain jobs, such as health worker, taxi driver or security guard
- Is the patient due to have a **major operation**?: A major operation will be associated with blood loss of >500ml and possible transfusion, significant fluid shifts, possible need for ITU, and inpatient stay of 5 days or more. These will include major abdominal resections, major spinal surgery, open thoracic surgery, open vascular surgery on major vessels, or intracranial surgery.
- **Existing medical conditions:** Patients with one high risk indicator or two moderate risk indicators are deemed at **high risk**. Patients with one moderate risk indicator are deemed at **moderate risk**.

Moderate indicators of risk	High indicators of risk
People who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are 70 or older • Have a mild lung condition (e.g. asthma, COPD, bronchitis) • Have heart disease (e.g. heart failure) • Have diabetes • Have chronic kidney disease • Have liver disease (e.g. hepatitis) • Have a neurological condition (e.g. Parkinson's, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis) • Have a condition that means a high risk of getting infections • Are taking medicine that affect the immune system (e.g. low doses of steroids) • Are very obese (BMI of 40 or above) • Are pregnant – see advice about pregnancy and coronavirus 	People who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have had an organ transplant • Are having chemotherapy or immunotherapy or radical radiotherapy • Have leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma • Have had a bone marrow or stem cell transplant in the past 6 months, or are still on immunosuppression • Have a severe lung condition (e.g. cystic fibrosis, severe asthma or severe COPD) • Have a condition that increases the risk of getting infections (such as SCID or sickle cell) • Are on high doses of steroids or immunosuppressant medicines • Have a serious heart condition and are pregnant

ADVICE ON PRE-OPERATIVE ISOLATION AND TESTING

Type of admission	No or Moderate Risk		High Risk		Notes
	Self-Isolation Pre-Operation*	Swab Test** Pre-Operation	Self-Isolation Pre-Operation*	Swab Test** Pre-Operation	
1. Major surgery	14 days	3 days	14 days	3 days	Pre-assessment
2. Intermediate/Minor Surgery or Endoscopy under GA or Sedation (IV Propofol)	3 days	3 days	14 days	3 days	Pre-assessment
3. Minor surgery or Endoscopy under Local Anaesthetic (+/- minimal sedation with IV Midazolam)	3 days	3 days	3 days	3 days	Pre-assessment for high risk patients
4. Elective medical admission	3 days	3 days	14 days	3 days	
5. Urgent / Emergency admission	Not Required	On Admission	Not Required	On Admission	
6. Diagnostic Outpatient procedures including Nasendoscopy	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	

*Advise patients to follow comprehensive social-distancing and hand-hygiene measures for 14 days before having planned care (as per the government advice on social distancing). ** Swab Test refers to a SARS-CoV-2 swab test.