

Welcome to Colchester General Hospital as a planned (non-emergency) inpatient

Introduction

We will make every effort to ensure you receive the very best treatment, care and attention during your stay.

This booklet provides important information to help you prepare for your stay before you come into hospital. An inpatient information booklet will be given to you by staff on the ward.

If you have any concerns regarding any other aspect of your stay, please ask a member of our staff.

Your appointment date.

You may already have received a letter informing you of your date for admission to hospital, although some wards prefer to phone you.

If you are unable to attend or unsure of the details

If, due to illness or any other reason, you are unable to come into hospital on your agreed date, please tell us as soon as possible so your place can be given to another patient. Please phone either the number on your admission letter, your nurse specialist (if you have been allocated one) or the ward that is expecting you via the hospital switchboard on 01206 747474.

Getting to the hospital

You are expected to make your own way to and from hospital. However, hospital transport can be provided if there is a clinical need, which is assessed by your GP or hospital staff.

Parking

Parking at the hospital is limited and not guaranteed. Please bring some change for parking. Disabled parking spaces are available close to the hospital for people with a valid disabled badge.

Public transport

There are regular bus services serving Colchester General Hospital which drop passengers off outside the hospital in Turner Road and pick up from near the hospital main entrance. For bus timetable information call:

Essex Traveline 0871 200 22 33

Leaflet name	Welcome to CGH as elective
Leaflet number	756n11
Created	June 2006
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Colchester North train station is a four minute bus ride or 15 minute uphill walk. Taxis are available at the station. For train timetable information call: National Rail Enquiries 0845 748 4950

Private patients

If you want to be treated as a private patient you should speak to your consultant prior to admission.

Treatment of overseas visitors

If you are visiting the United Kingdom or have been living outside the UK for more than three months you may have to pay for hospital treatment, regardless of whether you are a British citizen or have lived or worked here in the past.

Special needs

If you have mobility, communication, hearing or visual difficulties, please let us know in advance.

Medication and allergies

Your current medication should have been discussed with you during your pre-admission visit. However, if you are not sure whether you should stop taking it prior to the day of your operation, please contact your consultant’s secretary at least a week before if possible.

Please bring all of your current medication with you including all medication prescribed by your GP, bought from a chemist or alternative therapies, such as:

- tablets, capsules, inhalers, eye drops, liquids, creams, HRT, sprays and dressings
- herbal, homeopathic
- medidose/dosette box or any other medication aids.

Also, please bring a list of your medication and any allergies you have. It is good practice to always carry an up-to-date list of your medication and allergies in case of an emergency. This is essential so that we can obtain a correct drug history before prescribing any other medication.

Equipment

If you need to bring any large pieces of equipment, such as a wheelchair, please phone either 01206 742230 or 742223 to arrange collection.

Please bring:

- nightwear, underwear, a dressing-gown and slippers and loose-fitting comfortable daytime clothes such as T-shirts and tracksuit bottoms
- glasses if applicable, hearing aid and dentures with storage containers
- toiletries and a towel (not a white one to avoid confusion with hospital towels)
- hand wipes
- shaving materials (non-electric)
- any x-rays in your possession

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- any mobility aids, such as sticks, frame, splints, special shoes, wheelchair
- any useful information about your health that may be relevant to your stay in hospital (such as assessments carried out in your home or medical diaries)
- a contact phone number for a relative or close friend.

You might like to bring:

- books, magazines, newspapers
- writing materials
- personal stereo or ipod (with headphones)
- money to pay for our personal TV and phone service, newspapers and personal items.

Please do **not** bring:

- jewellery or large amounts of money
- large amounts of food
- large suitcases
- plug-in electrical equipment.

Valuables

We have very limited space for clothing and personal property. However, nursing staff on your ward will tell you what to do if you inadvertently bring in valuable items. We do not accept liability for any property or possessions that are lost or damaged unless they have been handed in for safe custody, and an official receipt obtained.

If you are being admitted on the day of your operation

Your admission letter will advise you when to stop eating and drinking (but it should be at least six hours before your admission). Failure to do so may mean your operation will need to be cancelled.

If you have diabetes and have any queries, please contact your consultant's secretary.

Please have a bath or shower before you come into hospital. If you are to have keyhole surgery pay particular attention to your tummy button area. Please do not use any toiletries around the area of your operation. Do not wear nail polish or make-up.

Consent

We must, by law, obtain your written consent before any operation and some other procedures. Staff will explain all the risks, benefits and alternatives before they ask you to sign a consent form. If you are unsure about any aspect of your treatment, please speak to a senior member of staff.

Identification wristbands

Wristbands are used to identify hospital inpatients. They carry your name, date of birth, NHS number and hospital number. This ensures that staff can identify you correctly and give you the right care.

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Your photographic records

As part of your treatment, a photographic record may be made, eg x-ray, clinical photograph or video which will be kept in your health record in confidence, seen only by those involved in your care or quality check. However, they are extremely important for teaching or medical research, so we may request your written consent to use yours, in which case your personal details would be taken out so you cannot be identified.

Verifying your identity

When you attend hospital you will be asked to confirm your first and last name, date of birth, postcode and NHS number if you know it, and to let us know if you have any allergies.

Comments, compliments or complaints about your care?

Please call PALS (Patient Advice Liaison Service) on 01206 742683, pick up a leaflet or visit www.colchesterhospital.nhs.uk

Your views

If you or a family member has recently been in Colchester General Hospital for any reason, you can tell us about your experience by either searching for "Colchester" on the NHS Choices website www.nhs.uk, and clicking on the "Leave review" section, or by writing to the address on the front of this leaflet or by emailing your comments to info@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk or by filling in a questionnaire at the hospital telling us if you would recommend our service to a friend or family member.

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