

## Your first appointment at the Head and Neck Clinic

Should you choose **not** to attend the clinic please contact **0121 424 5000** to enable us to use this urgent appointment for somebody else.

### What will happen at this appointment?

Your GP (General Practitioner) has arranged this appointment to find out the cause of the problems you are having with your head and/or neck. You may like to bring a friend or relative with you for company.

Please be aware that there will be several people present during your discussion with the doctor. They all have an important part to play in your treatment and care. In the clinic the doctors will:

- take a full medical history
- Examine your head and neck, including your ears

During the first appointment **you may also have** one or both of the following tests.

### A flexible nasendoscopic examination

This allows your doctor to look at your upper air tubes (larynx) and food passages (oesophagus). The camera is small flexible tube passed through nose to look further into throat. This is very simple procedure. A local anaesthetic spray can also be used to make your nose and throat numb. Most of the patients tolerate this very well without any local anaesthetic. You can certainly discuss with doctor.

### Fine needle aspiration (FNA)

This is a simple procedure which does not take long. This procedure is similar to having a blood test. If you have a lump a fine needle with a syringe attached is inserted into the lump and a specimen of the fluid content is withdrawn. The contents are then analysed in the laboratory and the results available in approximately two weeks. This may help your doctor decide on the type of lump you have and the best treatment for you.

This is usually done by the radiologist with ultrasound guidance. However in some situation can be done by the doctor in the clinic.

### When will I know the results?

The physical examination may give your doctor enough information to discuss the findings with you by the end of this first visit.

Sometimes these results will not be sufficiently clear to make a diagnosis and your doctor may wish to have the results of the laboratory tests before telling you exactly what is wrong. You may need to return to the hospital to have one or more of the following tests. All are arranged as soon as possible, usually within 2 – 3 weeks.

## **Further investigations**

### **Panendoscopy and biopsy**

This allows your doctor to examine your main internal head and neck sites in more detail. Your doctor may need to take samples of tissue or fluid. This test is carried out under a general anaesthetic and you will need to be admitted to hospital either for the day (day case) or to stay overnight (inpatient).

### **CT and MRI Scan**

These are painless examinations of your head, neck and chest using radio waves (CT) and magnetic waves (MRI). Please tell your doctor if you become anxious when you are in an enclosed space (claustrophobic), or if you have any metal implants in your body (Pacemaker, heart valve, screws or fixings following orthopaedic surgery).

### **A barium swallow**

You will be asked to swallow fluid which “shows up” your oesophagus when you have an x-ray taken. This is a painless test.

### **Ultrasound scan**

This is a painless examination of your head and neck using sound waves.

Investigations may be performed on various hospital sites, Heartlands, Good Hope or Solihull. Please check your letter headings carefully to avoid attending the wrong hospital.

### **Copy of Letters**

**If you would like a copy of the letter which the hospital doctor writes to your general practitioner please tell the doctor during your consultation and this will be arranged.**

If you need any of these further tests you will be provided with more detailed information. If you have any questions following your first appointment please contact the advanced nurse practitioner/head and neck councillor. Telephone the main hospital switchboard:

**0121 424 2000 and ask for pager 2927.**

### **Our commitment to confidentiality**

We keep personal and clinical information about you to ensure you receive appropriate care and treatment. Everyone working in the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential. We will always ask you for your consent if we need to use information that identifies you. We will share information with other parts of the NHS to support your healthcare needs, and we will inform your GP of your progress unless you ask us not to. You can help us by pointing out any information in your records which is wrong or needs updating