

Fast Track Surgery

As you are aware, an abnormality of your pancreas or the surrounding area, has been seen on your recent scan. For some people, especially those who are jaundiced, we know that a speedy referral to a specialist unit is necessary.

For this reason, you have been referred to the Specialist Liver and Pancreatic Unit at Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham (QEHB). The team are aware of you and your particular condition, and they are planning the best treatment for you.

For some people, this means up-front surgery followed by chemotherapy. For others, chemotherapy is needed first with the view to operate some months later. Others still, are never suitable for surgery, so chemotherapy alone may be offered. These decisions are primarily made at the QEHB multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meeting. Once there is a plan for treatment in place, this will be shared with your referring team and you will either be seen in the QEHB out-patient department or seen again in your local hospital where all the information will be shared with you. We will help you understand what your treatment plan involves and ensure that your opinion is taken into account.

For those people where up-front surgery is deemed the best treatment option, they will be offered an outpatient appointment at QEHB, potentially within a few days of being referred and may even be offered surgery within a week or two. We call this, 'fast track surgery'.

You may need further tests before we know if you are suitable for fast track surgery. Generally, these will be done at your local hospital and include a CT

scan of your thorax (chest), abdomen, and pelvis and an MRI scan of your liver. You will be given information about this as necessary. A minority of people need a camera test called an Endoscopic Ultra Sound scan or EUS for short.

If you are suitable for fast track surgery, we will plan for you to have surgery quickly. Whilst you are waiting, try to keep as active as possible and keep yourself hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids. You should be prescribed pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy (medication to help you digest your food) and an anti-acid tablet. Once we have an idea of the date for surgery, you should be prescribed Vitamin K tablets to help correct any blood-clotting problems. You may also be offered nutritional supplements. Please ask the team looking after you for further information about this.

We know that this will be a very stressful time for you and your family and you may feel very overwhelmed by how quickly things are happening. We understand this and want to make the situation as easy as possible. Specialist nurses are available in your local hospital and you may want to ask the ward staff to arrange for one of them to see you whilst you are an in-patient.

You will also see a pancreatic specialist nurse at QEHB who will help you prepare for potential surgery. They will also be able to explain your treatment and answer your questions about any further treatment or care that you may have.

Useful contacts:

Liver and Pancreas Specialist Nurses, QEHB:
0121 371 4652

If you require this information in another format, such as a different language, large print, braille or audio version please ask a member of staff or email interpreting.service@uhb.nhs.uk.

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