

Useful Information and Support

The following websites may be helpful to you:

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer>
<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/>
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/cancer/faster-diagnosis/>

Support Groups:

St Helens Cancer Support Group

<https://sthelenscancersupportgroup.org.uk/>

Lyndale Knowsley Cancer Support

<https://www.lyndalecancersupport.co.uk/>

Widnes & Runcorn Cancer Support Group

<https://www.widnesandruncorncancersupport.org.uk/>

If you are struggling and require support, the **Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service** at St Helens Hospital provides a confidential, drop-in service for anyone affected by cancer.

Please call 01744 646985/ 01744 647000 or email:
macmillansupport@sthk.nhs.uk

Whiston Hospital
Warrington Road,
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

St Helens Hospital
Marshall Cross Road,
St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 3DA
Telephone: 01744 26633

www.MerseyWestLancs.co.uk

Non-Specific Symptoms Faster Diagnostics Pathway

Patient Information

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formacie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

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What is a faster diagnosis pathway?

The Faster Diagnosis Pathways are designed to ensure patients are investigated and have cancer diagnosed or ruled out within 28 days of their referral.

For those diagnosed with cancer, this means they can start their treatment and next steps can be agreed quickly.

Your symptoms may be caused by a number of common conditions. Although there may be a concern that your symptoms could suggest cancer, it is important to remember that 92% of patients referred with suspected cancer do not receive a cancer diagnosis. The pathway will exclude cancer quickly for these patients, giving reassurance sooner.

Catching cancer early is key to receiving the most effective treatment and increasing the survival rate. Beginning treatment earlier will reduce the spread of cancer.

Each cancer site performs to Faster Diagnostic Standards. You have been referred to the **Non-Specific Symptoms (NSS) Faster Diagnostic Pathway (FDP)**.

Who will be looking after me?

The NSS team consists of a team of doctors and nurses who specialise in acute medicine and oncology (cancer).

The NSS team consists of a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) that work together to ensure that you have the most appropriate tests to get a diagnosis and management plan put in place as soon as possible.

Patient Experience Survey

In order to improve the patient experience for those referred to the NSS pathway, we would be grateful for any feedback.

- The survey can be completed in a number of ways:
- Paper format - this can be posted out to your address with a pre-paid returns envelope
- Weblink - we can send this to you directly
- QR Code - this can be scanned using most smart phones. Please scan the code below to access the survey this way.



Participation in this survey is voluntary; if you do not wish to take part you do not have to. Non-participation will not affect the care or treatment you receive. All completed surveys are anonymous.

Thank you for taking the time to help us improve patient care.

Enquiries and further information

If you have any questions about this service, please do not hesitate to contact the pathway navigator.

The pathway navigator will be able to answer any queries regarding pathways and appointments. However, as they are non-clinical, they may not be able to answer all of your questions but will signpost them to the specialist nurse who will return your call.

The pathway navigator's number is: 01744 646 7733

The navigator can answer any queries Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm.

Please use the space below to record anything you may find helpful.

Contact information

Questions

Why have I been referred to a non-specific symptoms pathway?

You may have been referred to a NSS pathway via one of these routes: GP appointment, A&E or an acute medical unit.

A clinician has referred you to the NSS pathway because you have symptoms that may need further investigation.

These symptoms are not specific of the common cancer and may include:

- Unintentional weight loss in the last three months
- Abnormal blood tests
- Unexplained abdominal pain of four weeks or more
- Unexplained or progressive pain, including bone pain of four weeks or more
- Sweats or night sweats
- Persistent and unexplained symptoms such as:
 - Nausea/bloating
 - Loss of appetite
 - Fatigue/extreme tiredness

Patient support

The NSS team will provide you with contact details for the pathway navigator. The navigator works with the specialist team and will be your main point of contact.

They will get in touch with you to ensure that you are kept up to date with what is happening such as appointment dates and any changes you need to be aware of.

What tests will I have?

To speed up your diagnosis, tests may have been arranged by your GP surgery or hospital to be completed prior to being seen by the NSS team. These may be an X-ray, CT scan, blood tests or a Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT).

Please follow the instructions and complete the tests as soon as possible, as this will speed up the time to provide you with a diagnosis.

Following your hospital appointment, you will be informed if you need any further tests. If you do these will be arranged for you by the nurse.

Further tests could include:

- Blood tests
- X-rays - a test to look at bones and the inside of your body
- CT scan (Computerised Tomography) - an x-ray that gives more detailed images of the inside of your body
- Endoscopy - a procedure to look inside your body with a thin flexible tube with a camera on one end

You will be provided with further information regarding each test should you need any.

Attendance at tests

In order to move forward in your pathway it is important to attend all appointments and tests. Failure to attend or complete tests will delay your diagnosis and may result in discharge from the pathway.

Getting your results

When all your results are available, they will be discussed in the MDT meeting by the non-specific symptoms team. You will then be contacted to discuss your results and the next steps.

You may be seen in a clinic appointment at the hospital or have a telephone or video clinic appointment arranged.

Your GP surgery will be kept updated with all your test results.

What happens following your diagnosis?

The outcome of your investigations could indicate there is a cancer.

In this instance we will arrange further investigations and an onward referral to the most appropriate team. You will be contacted by the hospital to arrange an appointment at the earliest convenience.

The investigations may rule out cancer but indicate follow-up is required by a different, more appropriate team.

The NSS nurse will arrange an onward referral so that this can be managed by specialists. The hospital will contact you to arrange an appointment.

This may not be done as urgent and will depend on the team's specific management plan and local policy.

In most cases, the investigations completed rule out cancer and any other serious illness. In this case, you will be referred back to Primary Care with advice and guidance.