

SPECIALIST ADVICE

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS



WHAT IS SPECIALIST ADVICE?

GPs/primary care healthcare professionals often get expert advice from a range of medical specialists to discuss the most appropriate, individual care for a patient. They do this before a patient is referred for an appointment with a specialist team, if that is needed.

The GP and the specialist will work together to decide if you should continue to be cared for by your GP, or if you need to be referred to a specialist service. This process makes sure your condition is treated by the most appropriate healthcare professional as quickly as possible. This also helps avoid any trips to hospital that may not be needed.

HOW DOES MY GP CONTACT THE SPECIALIST?

Your GP will contact a specialist through a referral system, by email or on the phone. Your GP may use the term 'advice and guidance' when describing the process of seeking specialist advice. This is the NHS name for this process.





TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

For some conditions (such as skin conditions), photographs may be needed. These will be reviewed by the specialist to help support assessment and diagnosis.

Where photographs are taken, they are only taken with explicit patient consent. All images are handled securely and saved to the GP record. If it is not appropriate to take photographs, a safe alternative will be discussed with you.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The specialist will carefully review all the information and either contact your GP with individualised advice on how to manage your care, or they will decide you should be referred to a hospital or clinic and offer you an appointment. Your GP will discuss with you the outcome of this referral and the advice they have received from the specialist, including advice on treatment whilst you are waiting to be seen. Either the GP surgery or the specialist team will contact you to arrange an appointment if a referral to a specialist team is needed. They will also discuss with you what choices there are for where you can be referred.



2026		SEPTEMBER					
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
27	28	29	30				

WHAT IF I DON'T HEAR FROM ANYONE?

We aim to provide specialist advice as promptly as possible to support your treatment plan. If your wait feels longer than expected, please get in touch with your GP Practice for an update.

If four weeks have passed since your GP consultation and you haven't received any information, please contact your GP Practice. You can use the NHS app to see the advice and guidance request and history. You can also use the App for quick access to medical records, appointments, prescriptions, and trusted health services .



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO GIVE FEEDBACK ON YOUR EXPERIENCE OF ADVICE AND GUIDANCE, FOLLOW THIS LINK, OR ASK YOUR GP PRACTICE TO GIVE FEEDBACK ON YOUR BEHALF.

