

# **Patient Information for telephone follow-up following treatment for ovarian cancer**

## Introduction

There is very good evidence to show that having regular follow-up appointments does not help prevent cancer returning or identify any new problems. Some patients find a follow-up appointment useful and reassuring, however some patients have told us these appointments cause a lot of worry and anxiety as well as not being helpful, unless they have something specific they wish to discuss. There is strong evidence that symptoms and concerns are addressed more quickly if patients report them as and when they occur, rather than waiting for their routine follow up appointment. Taking this into consideration patients are now being transferred from routine follow up and will be commencing telephone follow-up.

We have included information about how to get support and advice about your health. If you have any concerns or questions that are not covered in this booklet, please speak to your Gynaecology Clinical Nurse Specialist.

## What are the benefits of telephone follow up?

- Fewer visits to the hospital
- No transport costs.
- No problems with hospital parking.
- No time off work.
- Reduces anxiety and worry.
- Speaking to the same person.

## What can I expect from my telephone follow up clinic appointment?

- The date and time of the appointment will be sent in the post.
- Your Clinical Nurse Specialist will contact you on that day and time at your given telephone contact number. You may wish to ensure you are in a quiet private location at this time.
- Your telephone assessment will include:
  - Discussion of your general health
  - Discussion of any problems or concerns you may have.
- If there is any cause for concern, the nurse will arrange an appointment for you to see your Consultant

- A letter, summarising the call, will be sent to yourself (if you have requested this) and your GP.

## **What support can my Clinical Nurse Specialist provide?**

You can contact your Clinical Nurse Specialist for specialist advice, support and information, at any point for five years following your completion of treatment.

## **What symptoms should I seek advice about?**

You will need to contact your Clinical Nurse Specialist if you experience these symptoms, they will discuss your concerns and if required arrange a clinic appointment for you.

- Bloating stomach
- Vaginal discharge
- Pelvic pain
- Pain and or difficulty passing water.
- Unexplained weight changes (loss or gains)
- Altered bowel habit (diarrhoea or constipation)
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Loss of appetite
- Shortness of breath

## **Who can I talk to about how I am feeling?**

Some people will be relieved when they are told that they no longer need to attend regular follow-up appointments, as they can start getting their lives back to normal. Others may be worried about the future and losing contact with hospital staff.

If you are finding it difficult to move on after your cancer treatment, you may want to talk to someone. This could be your Clinical Nurse Specialist or GP: if needed one-to-one support or counselling can be arranged.

<p><b>Cancer Specialist Nurse for Gynae Oncology</b></p> <p>You are able to speak to CNS in office hours, but we would suggest where at all possible to contact in between 9.15 am -10.15 am, Monday to Friday.</p>	<p>0191 445 3404</p> <p>0191 445 2123</p> <p>0191 445 6706</p>
<p>Out of hours contact numbers</p> <p>Ward 21</p>	<p>0191 445 5921</p> <p>0191 445 2021</p>

## What if I do not want to have telephone follow up?

Telephone follow up may not be right for some people. If you feel you would rather attend hospital appointments to see the nurse then this can be arranged.

## Further information or support please contact:-

**Cancer Connections** - 258 Harton Lane, South Shields NE34 0LR

Based in South Tyneside they offer friendship, emotional and practical support, counselling, complementary therapies, home visits, benefits and financial advice, telephone support to anybody who has or has had cancer, their family and carers, and anyone bereaved by cancer.

Tel 0191 456 5081

Email [info@cancerconnections.org.uk](mailto:info@cancerconnections.org.uk)

**FACT** – Fighting All Cancers Together, Suite 4, Enterprise House, Kingsway’s North, Team Valley. Gateshead. NE11 0SR.

Tel 0191 442 0833

Email [info@fact-cancersupport.co.uk](mailto:info@fact-cancersupport.co.uk)

Web [www.fact-cancersupport.co.uk](http://www.fact-cancersupport.co.uk)

**Macmillan Cancer Information and Support** – Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Purple Zone

Open times Monday-Friday 10.00am to 4.00pm Telephone answering service

Tel 0191 4452979

Email [Macmillaninfo@ghnt.nhs.uk](mailto:Macmillaninfo@ghnt.nhs.uk)

**Maggie Centre**, Freeman Hospital, Melville Grove, Newcastle upon Tyne. NE7 7NU.

Maggie Centre provides practical, emotional and social support for anybody who has had a cancer, their family, carers and friends of people affected by cancer.

Open Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm.

**Maggie Centre Gynae Oncology Support Group**. Meet every 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month 4.00pm till 6pm

Tel 0191 233 6600

Fax 0191 233 6609

Email [newcastle@maggiecentres.org](mailto:newcastle@maggiecentres.org).

**Ovacome**

Nurse-led service offering confidential information and emotional support to anyone affected by ovarian cancer.

Telephone: 0845 371 0554 Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm

Website: [www.ovacome.org.uk](http://www.ovacome.org.uk)

**Target Ovarian Cancer**

An organisation dedicated to achieving a long and good life for every woman with ovarian cancer.

Telephone: 020 7923 5470 Website: [www.targetovarian.org.uk](http://www.targetovarian.org.uk).

**The Eve Appeal**

Funds research into ovarian and other gynaecological cancers.

Telephone: 0207 605 0100 Website: [www.eveappeal.org.uk](http://www.eveappeal.org.uk)

## Data Protection

Any personal information is kept confidential. There may be occasions where your information needs to be shared with other care professionals to ensure you receive the best care possible.

In order to assist us to improve the services available, your information may be used for clinical audit, research, teaching and anonymised for National NHS Reviews and Statistics.

Further information is available via Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust website (<https://www.qegateshead.nhs.uk/fairprocessing>) or by contacting the Data Protection Officer by telephone on 0191 445 8418 or by email [ghnt.ig.team@nhs.net](mailto:ghnt.ig.team@nhs.net).

**This leaflet can be made available in other languages and formats upon request**

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