

# Urgent referral lung pathway

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## Information for patients

Your GP has referred you urgently to the Lung Team at the Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH) to investigate the cause of your symptoms. This information explains what happens next, including the tests you may have to help us make a diagnosis and how we decide the best treatment for you.

You and your family may find the uncertainty about what is happening stressful, so we will do our best to support you. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to the doctors or nurses caring for you.

### **Confirming your identity**

Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your **name and date of birth** and check your **ID band**. If you don't have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address.

**If we don't ask these questions, then please ask us to check.**  
Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

## What happens after I have been referred?

Here we describe the stages in the urgent referral lung pathway.

1. Once we get the urgent referral from your GP, one of our respiratory consultants will review the referral information. They will decide whether you should go straight to have a CT scan or be seen in an outpatient clinic first.
2. You may then need a series of tests to help us make a diagnosis. These will be arranged by a member of the Lung Team.
3. The results will be discussed at a multidisciplinary team (MDT) meeting that involves doctors, nurses and other health professionals who specialise in lung problems. They will agree a diagnosis and appropriate treatment.
4. We may ask you to come back for another outpatient appointment so we can discuss the results of the tests and the next steps in your care.
5. If you do not need to come back for another outpatient appointment, we will discharge you back to the care of your GP. We will send a letter to you and your GP explaining the results from any tests you have had, your diagnosis (if relevant), and any follow up care you may need.

## What tests will I have?

You may need to have a series of tests so we can find out what is causing your symptoms. Which ones you have depend on your specific needs.

To keep to a minimum the number of outpatient appointments you need to attend, the Lung Team will review the results of these tests and, where appropriate, phone you to let you know the next steps in your pathway. **Please make sure we have your latest contact details so we can get in touch with you.**

*Please note:* if you are having an EBUS test or PET scan at St Thomas' Hospital, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust will phone you to arrange your appointment.

### **Chest x-ray:**

This produces images of the heart, lungs, airways, blood vessels and the bones of the spine and chest.

### **Computerised tomography (CT) scan:**

This produces x-ray images of your body in 'slices'. Most people need to have a needle put in their arm for this test. This is so that a substance called contrast dye can be injected in order to enhance the visibility of structures or fluids within the body.

### **Pulmonary function tests (PFTS):**

These show how well your lungs are working and how well you are able to breathe.

### **Magnetic resonance imaging scan (MRI) scan:**

This uses a strong magnetic field to produce detailed images of the inside of your body. An MRI scanner is a large tube that you lie inside during your scan.

**Positron emission tomography (PET) scan:**

For this scan, you have a special dye that contains radioactive 'tracers' put into your body. Your organs and tissues absorb these tracers to show which areas are not working normally. You usually have your PET scan at King's College Hospital in Denmark Hill or St Thomas' Hospital (part of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust).

**Needle biopsy:**

We take a sample (biopsy) of your lung tissue using ultrasound or CT scans to guide us. We give you a local anaesthetic to numb where we put the needle in.

**Bronchoscopy:**

You usually have light sedation for this test so you will be awake but feel relaxed and possibly drowsy. We will numb your nose, throat and voicebox with a local anaesthetic spray. We will then pass a thin telescope (bronchoscope) with a tiny video camera on the end into your nose and down your throat to look at your breathing tubes and lungs. We can also take biopsies or fluid samples at the same time.

**Endobronchial ultrasound (EBUS):**

You have this test at St Thomas' Hospital. You will be sedated and feel very relaxed. A slim flexible tube with an ultrasound probe on the end will be passed through your mouth and down into your lungs. The doctor will be able to look at the glands in that area and take samples using a thin needle (fine needle aspiration/FNA).

*Please note:* If you have not been contacted within 2 working days of your EBUS referral then please contact the Chest Clinic at on 020 7188 5823 (Monday-Friday 9am-4pm).

**Video-assisted thoracoscopic surgery (VATS):**

You usually have this procedure at Guy's Hospital. It is a type of keyhole surgery that allows doctors to see inside your chest and lungs using a thin telescope (thoroscope) with a small video camera. During the procedure, they can also take samples, take out lymph nodes, remove lumps or growths from your lung, and treat other lung conditions such as pleural effusions (where fluid accumulates in the lining of your lung).

**How will you make decisions about my diagnosis and treatment?**

Every Monday, the Lung Team's specialist doctors and nurses hold a multidisciplinary team (MDT) meeting. This group meeting includes consultant radiologists (imaging specialists) and consultant pathologists who analyse your biopsies and other samples. Specialist clinicians from Guy's and St Thomas's NHS Foundation Trust also come to the meeting to help decide your treatment options.

They will look at all your test results and decide the best way to make a diagnosis and how best to treat you.

After the MDT, we will phone you or see you in an outpatient clinic to explain the next steps in your care and to let you know if you need any more tests.

If your test results are not ready for the weekly MDT meeting, we may need to change the date of your next outpatient appointment.

## Who can I contact with queries and concerns?

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact our clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) Nicky de Lobel and Debbie Brown. They are based in the Chartwell Outpatient Department.

- To speak to a CNS, tel: 01689 864713, Monday to Thursday, 9am - 5pm. You can also leave a message on this number. Messages are checked regularly and your call will be returned.
- On Fridays, contact the Lung Team secretaries, tel: 01689 865877 or 01689 863297. You can also leave a message on these numbers. Messages are checked regularly and your call will be returned.

**If the situation is urgent please contact your GP or dial 111.**

**In an emergency dial 999.**

## Sharing your information

We have teamed up with Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals in a partnership known as King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas'. To make sure everyone you meet always has the most up-to-date information about your health, we may share information about you between the hospitals.

## Care provided by students

We provide clinical training where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

## PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. The PALS office is in the main hospital foyer at PRUH and they would be happy to advise you.

Tel: 01689 863252

Email: [kch-tr.palskent@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.palskent@nhs.net)

You can also contact us by using our online form at [www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals](http://www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals)

**If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 01689 863252.**