



Non-Specific Symptoms (NSS) Faster Diagnostics Service

Information for patients from the NSS Team

What is NSS?

Non-specific symptoms are symptoms that could be cancer, and which need to be checked by a specialist team. The NSS service is designed to give patients who are referred by their GP quick access to the specialist hospital team. The quicker a diagnosis is made, the better the patient's outcome will be.

Some symptoms may include:

- unexplained weight loss
- vague abdominal pain
- nausea (feeling sick) and / or appetite loss
- fatigue (tiredness)

Why do I need to be seen by the hospital so quickly?

Your GP feels your symptoms need further investigations. So they have arranged for you to be seen by the hospital's NSS Faster Diagnostic Service for quick assessment.

Does this mean I may have cancer?

No, it does not. There are many common illnesses that may be causing your symptoms, including the possibility of cancer.

We need to find out what is causing your symptoms and start treatment as soon as possible. If cancer is found, getting a diagnosis early means treatment may have better results.

I have been referred, what happens next?

You will be contacted by the hospital, as you may need to have tests done before you are asked to come to hospital for your first appointment. At this appointment you will meet with a specialist nurse and / or a consultant, so that they can understand what is causing your symptoms.

It is really important that you come to the first appointment that you are offered. The earlier your symptoms are investigated the better.

Will I need to have more tests?

You may need to have more tests after your first hospital appointment. These may include MRI, CT, or ultrasound scans, which are imaging tests to examine your body. Some of the tests may need to be done at our other hospitals in Ashford, Canterbury, or Margate.

What do I need to do?

The hospital may need to contact you by telephone to make appointments or talk to you. Please can you make sure all your contact details are up to date.

Please let the NSS Team know as soon as possible if you are unable to come to any of your appointments. It is really important to have another appointment made as soon as possible.

The NSS Team

The NSS service is a specialist team who work together to diagnose and plan the best treatment for each patient. The team will arrange any referrals you need to other specialist cancer and non-cancer teams.

If you have any questions or worries, please contact the NSS Team. We are here to listen and support you at all times.

NSS Team contact details

- Telephone: 01233 616777
- Email (ekhuft.nss.rapiddiagnosticservice@nhs.net)
- Open Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm

We may not be able to answer your call straight away. Please leave a message on the answer machine and we will return your call as soon as we can. Please remember to leave your name, date of birth, and hospital or NHS number. A member of the team will get back to within 24 hours.

Please contact us if you have any questions about your appointment or NSS service.

Your opinion matters

The NSS team would like to hear about your experience of the NSS Service, to understand 'what matters to you.'

Your feedback will help us to improve care for other people that may access this service. If you could give us a few minutes of your time to answer some questions, please ask a member of staff for more information on

how to do this.

Finding your way

By car: there is patient Pay and Display parking (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/information-for-patients/facilities/parking/>)

By public transport: there is a bus stop outside the hospital entrance. Stagecoach journey planner (<https://www.stagecoachbus.com/plan-a-journey>) is available for further information on bus times.

NHS Transport: East Kent Hospitals can provide free transport if you have mobility needs that may make it difficult for you to get to your hospital appointment. You can find out more about this service and check the eligibility criteria by viewing the Patient Transport Services (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/information-for-patients/facilities/patient-transport-services/>) page on the Trust web site. Or you can call the G4S Bookings Line 08000 96 02 11.

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 783145 (tel://+441227783145), or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net (ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net)

Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals website (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/information-for-patients/patient-information/>).

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