



# Patient Initiated Follow-Up (PIFU) (Gynae-Oncology)

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## Information for patients from the Gynae-Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist Team

This information sheet is designed to help you decide when or if you need to contact your Gynae-Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist team for advice.

Now that you have completed your cancer treatment you have been referred into Patient Initiated Follow-Up, sometimes known as PIFU. Instead of having regular follow-up clinic appointments, you will be able to contact us when or if you need to discuss any worries or concerns you may have.

### When should I call?

You should telephone us if:

- you have any symptoms that you are worried about, causing you to think your cancer may have returned
- you have any ongoing problems or side effects after your treatment; or
- you need emotional support or have any worries or concerns.

### What symptoms should I call for advice about?

If you have any of the following symptoms for no reason that last longer than a few days.

- Bleeding from your vagina
- Vaginal discharge
- Bleeding from your rectum (back passage)
- Bleeding after sex
- Pelvic pain
- Problems with passing urine
- Diarrhoea or constipation (problems opening your bowels)

- Abdominal (stomach) bloating that does not go away
- Swollen legs or pain in the back of your legs
- Weight loss, not linked with dieting or increased exercise
- Feeling generally unwell
- Persistent dry cough.

These are some of the common symptoms people have if their cancer has returned. It is important to remember not everyone will have these symptoms, and even if you do, it does not necessarily mean that your cancer has returned.

### **I'm feeling more emotional than usual, is this normal?**

Yes. It is normal to feel emotional for a while after treatment has ended, and recovery can take time. You can call your clinical nurse specialist to discuss anything that is worrying you, such as:

- low mood, depression, feelings of isolation
- sexual concerns
- money worries; or
- problems related to your diagnosis or treatment, such as lymphoedema (swelling of the legs).

### **When should I contact my GP?**

It is important to remember you will still get coughs and colds like everyone else. You can still see your GP for any concerns. If they are concerned, they can contact your clinical nurse specialist and arrange for you to be seen by a member of the hospital team.

### **What happens when I contact my clinical nurse specialist?**

When you call your clinical nurse specialist, they will discuss your concerns with you and recommend one of the following.

- A clinic appointment to see us at the hospital.
- For you to make an appointment with your GP.
- Reassure you that no further action is needed.

We want you to feel supported on PIFU. We will contact you before you are discharged from the service to your GP, and remind you of the signs and symptoms to look out for. If you have any questions, please ask a member of the team.

### **Contact details**

Please call your clinical nurse specialist via the Cancer Care Line on 01227 868666, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm and Saturday to Sunday 8am to 5pm. A member of staff will answer the phone and book you the next

available appointment for your clinical nurse specialist to call you back (usually within 24 hours).

**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](mailto:ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net) ([ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto: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.ekhft.nhs.uk/information-for-patients/patient-information/>).

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