

Respiratory department

Asthma rapid access review service

Information for patients, relatives and carers

What is the rapid access review service?

We are already seeing you in the asthma clinic. We would like to offer you support in the event of a flare-up of your asthma symptoms (e.g. breathlessness, chest tightness or wheeze). This will help us to find out what is causing the flare-up and give you the appropriate treatment early.

The Rapid Access Review Service is not an emergency service for severe asthma attack. If you have a severe asthma attack, please call 999.

How the service works

The service is available during our working hours which are **09.00 to 17.00 Monday to Friday**. The service is **not** available on the weekends or on bank holidays.

If your asthma symptoms are getting worse, and you're experiencing breathlessness, cough, wheeze or chest tightness, despite using your regular inhalers and medications, please ring us on **020 3311 3313 (this number is for voicemail only)**. **Please leave your name, NHS number or hospital number and tell us the reason(s) for your call.** We aim to ring you back within two working days.

When we ring you back, we will ask some questions over the telephone to make sure you we'll be able to help you at the clinic. If we can, we will offer you an appointment the same or next day. Once we've booked your appointment, we'll send you a text message with the details. However, if you are very concerned about your asthma flare-up and need immediate support, please contact your GP or NHS 111.

If your symptoms are severe (e.g. you cannot talk in a full sentence, your peak flow drops to 50% of your best, and you cannot walk or manage your activities of daily living), we will tell you to dial 999 to get emergency medical help.

If you experience symptoms outside our working hours, please ring 111 or 999 to get urgent medical help.

Where is the clinic?

The clinic is at the **Chest and Allergy Clinic, St Mary's Hospital, Paddington**. Sometimes it could also be at our other hospital sites (Charing Cross Hospital or Hammersmith Hospital). We'll tell you the exact location of your appointment when we book it for you.

What to expect in clinic

One of our nurse specialists will review you. We will take a medical history, do a physical examination, and check your vital signs (including your blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate, temperature and oxygen saturation). We will do clinical tests depending on your symptoms (see below).

Clinical tests

- Peak flow measurement – this is to check how fast and quickly you can blow out, and we will compare the readings with your known personal best or what is expected for your height, age and gender.
- Fractional nitric oxide measurement – this is to help us check how inflamed your airways are. If the readings are high, this will help us to find out if you need a course of prednisolone (a medication that will reduce the inflammation in your airways). It will also help us to find out if your preventer inhaler needs to be changed.
- Spirometry – this test is to help check the volumes of air you can blow out in a relax breathing and how fast, quickly and forcefully you can breathe out per a second.
- Blood tests
- Throat swab for respiratory viruses
- Sputum (phlegm) sample.

What happens after your appointment?

Our nurse specialist will speak with one of our asthma consultants and decide on a management plan. We will also explain the plan to you. We will send a clinic letter to you and your GP.

Once the test results are available, we will contact you as soon as possible and tell you if you need any other treatment.

We will also ring you to check your progress. How often we ring you will depend on your condition.

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3312 7777** (10.00 – 16.00, Monday to Friday). You can also email PALS at

imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street
London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:
imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk

Respiratory department
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