

# Your patient initiated follow-up (PIFU) pathway (Rheumatology)

Department of Rheumatology

Information for Patients/Carers

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**This leaflet applies to adults or young people under the care of the Rheumatology Department.**

## What is patient initiated follow-up?

After your recent consultation or treatment, your clinician has put you on a pathway which allows you to arrange (initiate) your own follow-up appointments. This is called the patient initiated follow-up (PIFU) pathway.

## How will the patient initiated follow-up (PIFU) pathway help me?

PIFU allows you to make an appointment for your condition when you feel you need it. This is within a fixed time period and for specific reasons agreed between you and your clinician. This means you avoid having regular review appointments when you do not want or need them.

You or your carer can make a request to your service if you have concerns about your specific condition or symptoms. Your request will be reviewed by the team. They will contact you and offer advice or an appointment. This could be by telephone, video or face to face.

Further appointments can be made if they are needed after your first consultation.

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

## Which symptoms would mean I need to come back to the clinic?

Your clinician will have spoken to you about which specific symptoms mean you should contact us for advice or an appointment.

### You should contact us for advice or an appointment if:

- you experience a worsening of your symptoms and think you need to be seen by a member of the Rheumatology Team.
- you have a flare of your condition/ symptoms that do not settle with usual self-management methods e.g. anti-inflammatory medications, exercises and stretches.
- you have flares that are happening more frequently than usual.

## When can I not use this patient initiated follow-up (PIFU) pathway?

Your PIFU pathway only relates to the condition you are being treated for as detailed in your clinic outcome letter. You should **not** use your patient initiated follow-up (PIFU) pathway:

- for urgent medical advice - please remember that your PIFU pathway and our Rheumatology telephone advice line are not for urgent medical advice. If you need urgent medical advice, you should contact your GP, NHS 111, your local walk-in health centre, or your local Emergency Department (if you are really unwell).
- if your concern is related to a different condition or symptoms other than that agreed with your clinician.
- for requesting medication, prescription queries, or to chase blood test results (for these queries please contact the admin team using the online link sent to you, or on 0116 258 5264, and select the correct option).
- for appointment queries (for these queries please contact the admin team using the online link sent to you, or on 0116 258 5264, and select the correct option).
- if the time period agreed for your pathway has ended.

## How long will I be on this agreed PIFU pathway for?

As agreed with your clinician, the time period for your PIFU pathway will be stated in your clinic outcome letter.

If you have not contacted us within your PIFU time period, you will be discharged back to your GP's care. If you need to be seen again after you have been discharged you will need to be referred to the service again by your GP.

If you are on disease modifying medication or biological therapy, you will automatically be booked in for a routine review in line with your consultation outcome, at the end of your PIFU pathway.

## How do I contact the service for advice or an appointment?

If you are on a PIFU pathway, you can contact the service for advice or to arrange (initiate) an appointment using the link sent to you via text message. You will need to complete the online form with details of your condition. If you are unable to access the link via text message, please call 0116 258 5264 and select from the options given to you.

The Rheumatology Team will assess your request on the day and either:

- book you in for a telephone call with a specialist nurse, as soon as possible.
- book you in directly with your consultant, as soon as possible.

## Self-management advice

The following websites have useful information about managing your symptoms between appointments:

- Rheumatoid Arthritis - <https://nras.org.uk/smile/>
- Ankylosing Spondylitis - <https://nass.co.uk/managing-my-as/my-as-my-life/>
- Polymyalgia rheumatica (PMR) - <https://pmrgca.org.uk/>

## Giving us your feedback

If you have any concerns or complaints, or wish to give feedback or a compliment, you can speak to a member of staff within the service.

You can also contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) using the contact details below:

**Freephone:** 0808 178 8337

**Email:** [pals@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

**Online contact form:** [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/patients/patient-welfare/patient-information-and-liaison-service/contact-form/](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/patients/patient-welfare/patient-information-and-liaison-service/contact-form/)

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔  
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل  
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।  
Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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