

Patient Coronavirus (Covid-19) Policy Version 3 – 1st August 2020

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide clear and concise information to patients regarding them returning to the practice. This helps to limit risk and protect patients, staff and practitioners. This document is under constant review and will be updated regularly.

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1. Introduction

Following the recent advice from the government and our chiropractic associations we are pleased to say that, from 1st August 2020, we are able to see all patients for face-to-face for treatment. We pride ourselves on honesty and transparency, and whilst we as a clinic have done everything we can to limit the risk of Coronavirus (Covid-19) transmission we all know this cannot be guaranteed by anyone at this time. You must know that you are attending your appointment knowing this to be the case.

This is still a delicate time and we still have a responsibility to our community to ensure that we practice in a way that, to the very best of our ability, limits any spread of the coronavirus. Therefore, we have social distancing measures in place throughout the clinic and we ask that our patients observe these at all times. During treatment where a 2m distance is not possible our practitioners will be wearing appropriate PPE sourced from suppliers that do not impact on the supply to NHS and other front-line care workers.

To help you, our staff and our practitioners we have produced a set of simple patient guidelines to give you a pleasant and, most of all, safe visit to the clinic. We ask that you please:

- Only attend the clinic for your appointment – no entry will be allowed without a scheduled appointment
- Do not bring family members or friends with you to your appointments unless they are needed as a chaperone for patients aged under 16, or for mobility or communication reasons (please check with our staff first)
- Please use hand sanitisers on entering and exiting the building
- Avoid any unnecessary handling of furniture or clinic property
- Where possible please wear clothing that allows your practitioner to see the area that is being treated and allows good flexibility. For example, a vest top for women having their neck treated, gym wear or loose-fitting clothing for lower back treatment, shorts for knee and ankle treatment. Gowns will still be provided where necessary but we ask that this be kept to a minimum
- Use your own face covering, in line with government guidelines, throughout the clinic. Your mouth and nose should be fully covered. If you do not have your own face covering, you will be required to use a single use mask supplied by the clinic at a charge of £1.50 (cost price) and you will be responsible for its safe disposal after exiting the building. We strongly advise that you use your own as we have a very limited supply
- When booking an appointment, please ensure your email address and phone number are up to date as we will be sending pre-appointment emails with more precise details on the appointment process

Our team have been fully trained on our updated infection control policies and procedures to further ensure your safety and theirs.

2. What is expected of our patients before attending the clinic?

All patients will be screened (risk assessed) before being offered a face-to-face appointment. This will usually take place by telephone, but other remote screening processes may also be used and will always be prior to a patient entering the premises or clinical area or at 2m social distance. For most patients this will take place at the time of booking. We will assess whether an individual is asymptomatic, symptomatic and meets the case

definition, or where the potential risk cannot be established. If an individual is symptomatic, or where we are unable to establish a clear decision, the British Chiropractic Association (BCA) advises that these patients should not be offered a face-to-face consultation. We reserve the right to refuse appointments on this basis until such time that a suitable isolation period has taken place and that any symptoms have fully resolved.

Screening to determine your health risk will include:

- **Fever (high temperature)** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **New, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **Shortness of breath** – have you become breathless or more breathless than usual?
- **Anosmia (smell/taste)** – has your sense of smell and/or taste disappeared, reduced or changed? Does this feel different than normal?

Screening to determine your transmission risk will include:

- Have you been unwell in the last 14 days?
- Have you been in contact with anyone that has been unwell in the last 14 days?
- Have you travelled back to the UK from anywhere in the world, by any means of transport, in the last 14 days?

We will also carefully screen patients that fall into the “clinically extremely vulnerable” (those people who were, or are still being, advised to “shield” by the government or “clinically vulnerable” (those people with underlying health conditions and/or aged 70+) categories. Appointment times will be offered to these patients at the beginning or the end of each session to further reduce contact with others.

3. What is expected of our patients when attending an appointment?

All patients must wash their hands just before leaving their home/work when setting off to attend their appointment.

Please come dressed appropriately for treatment as we will be limiting gown use to essential needs only. For example:

- females receiving neck/shoulder treatment should wear a vest top which exposes the area adequately for treatment. Underwear can remain on as normal.
- low back treatment – flexible and loose-fitting clothing/gym wear which can easily be manoeuvred to expose the skin of the low back should be worn
- lower limb issues (leg/knee/ankle) – please consider wearing shorts

Changing facilities will be provided as normal if these are required

We ask patients not to arrive too early as this may disrupt the strict timing of the clinic and result in increased risk of patient to patient contact. If you arrive early, please remain in your car or wait outside the clinic, observing 2m social distancing, until a few minutes before your appointment. 3-5 minutes before your appointment (unless you have specifically been asked to arrive earlier) please make your way to the main entrance, ring the bell and wait. After you have sanitised your hands, a staff member will direct you to your designated waiting area within the clinic that ensures you are 2m from anyone else. Please be patient with us if you are kept waiting for a short time – we are operating with minimum staff and we may be busy. Please be assured that we will not keep you waiting any longer than is necessary. Please ensure that anyone accompanying you remains outside the clinic unless we have agreed otherwise in advance. Any special arrangements must be agreed in advance and will not be granted at the time of your appointment.

Please ensure your face covering is securely in place before entering the building. This should cover your mouth and nose at all times. Please wear it for the whole time you are in our building and do not remove it until after you have left the clinic.

On entering and exiting the building you will be asked to use the hand sanitiser provided to clean your hands. Best practice posters are displayed for your education and guidance. Full hand washing facilities including running hot water and soap are provided in the bathroom as normal. Please use the paper hand towels provided to dry your hands and place the used towel in the bin provided. Do NOT flush these down the toilet.

We ask that you remain 2m from any other person whilst attending appointments. This is with the obvious exception of your practitioner who will be wearing appropriate PPE and following strict guidelines. Even with your practitioner we ask that you keep close contact to the bear minimum required for us to provide high quality care.

We ask that you refrain from touching clinic property where possible including door handles and other hard surfaces.

We ask that payments are made by contactless or card payment wherever possible. We will be cleaning the card machine thoroughly between each use. Cash payments will be accepted, but these should be avoided where possible.

Please ensure you sanitise your hands as you exit the building.

4. What are we doing as a clinic to limit risk to patients, staff and practitioners?

We have conducted detailed risk assessments and implemented mitigating actions where necessary to reduce risk as much as possible. This includes reducing footfall through the clinic, spacing appointments, reserving priority appointments for those who are clinically at higher risk, training for all staff and practitioners, increased infection control processes and procedures, the wearing of correct PPE where indicated in accordance with Public Health England's current guidance, and reducing patient to patient contact. Our risk assessments are ongoing processes and we will be constantly reviewing and updating our procedures as the climate dictates.

Our staff and practitioners are on phased return and shifts have been altered to limit contact within the clinic.

We are operating strict social distancing procedures and wearing correct PPE where social distancing is not possible during treatment. Our reception staff will be wearing masks and working behind a Perspex screen.

There are hand sanitisation points around the clinic for all to use. There is no hand sanitiser in the bathroom as there is a good supply of hot running water and soap for hand washing purposes. Guidelines for good handwashing are also displayed in the bathroom.

5. Other information and resources

NHS symptom checker (Covid-19)

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>

British Chiropractic Association Covid-19 Updates

<https://chiropractic-uk.co.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from Covid-19

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

Government guidance on coronavirus (covid-19)

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>