

How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. We ask that you, and anyone visiting you, use the hand sanitiser available at the entrance to every ward before coming in to or after leaving the ward. In some situations hands may need to be washed at the sink using soap and water rather than using the hand sanitiser. Staff will let you know if this is the case.

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Author: OPAT Team
Issue date: January 2019
Review date: January 2021

Leaflet code: CISS-069
Version: 4.0

OPAT Service

(Outpatient Parenteral Antimicrobial Therapy)

**For patients receiving
Intravenous (IV) antibiotic(s)
in the Home/Outpatient
setting**

Patient Information Leaflet

If you require a translation or an alternative format of this leaflet please call the Patient Advice & Liaison Service on 01296 316042

Safe & compassionate care,

every time

Introduction

If you are considered suitable for the OPAT (Outpatients Parenteral Antimicrobial Therapy) service you would be able to complete your IV (intravenous) antibiotic treatment in your home, outpatient setting or a community hospital.

If this treatment is appropriate, your IV antibiotics will be given by a team of nurses in the community or as an outpatient. How we administer the IV antibiotics into your vein will be discussed with you by the OPAT team.

What is OPAT?

OPAT is a team of specialist nurses who will co-ordinate your care between hospital and the community or other outpatient settings.

The team will ensure that you leave hospital with the correct doses of the prescribed antibiotic(s) and all the equipment you need for the safe administration. The management of the IV line will be discussed and a separate leaflet will be given for information.

The team will also provide you with a set of hand held notes / booklet containing information regarding your treatment. You should keep the booklet with you at all times until the end of your course of treatment.

Who to contact

The OPAT / IV therapy team are available 7 days a week to answer any questions you may have.

Please do not hesitate to contact us as follows:

OPAT Team:

Mon-Sun 8.30am- 4.30pm Tel: 01296 315485
or 07810 181 584
Bank Holidays: 9.00am- 4.30pm (on call basis)
Tel: 07810 181 584

Outside of these hours:

Please contact your GP surgery. They will guide you to the out of hours on-call telephone number for emergencies or call:

Accident & Emergency (A&E):

Stoke Mandeville Hospital: **01296 315664**

Explain that you are receiving IV antibiotic(s) at home and you may need to be seen by the Medical / Surgical / Orthopaedic registrar. Bring your hand-held notes/ Booklet with you whenever you come to the hospital.

If you become unwell for any other reason you should contact your GP or call an ambulance if you are very unwell.

4. Diabetic foot infection

- Increased oozing, odour or pain from wounds

5. Resistant urinary tract infection

- Burning sensation when passing urine/ or there is blood present
- Unable to pass urine.

How long will I need to receive treatment?

The length of treatment will be decided by your Consultant. Although an initial duration may be prescribed, you should be aware that occasionally this may be lengthened or shortened if your Consultant feels you would benefit from a change in your treatment plan. This will be decided at your outpatient appointments if necessary, in conjunction with the OPAT Nurses and Microbiology team.

The administration and the location of your treatment will depend on the duration of the antibiotic course. This will be discussed with you and arrangements will be made by the OPAT service.

The OPAT service is available 7 days a week to offer you support and advice regarding your treatment .

Why do I need IV antibiotics?

IV antibiotics are used to treat many types of bacterial infections. In some conditions, IV antibiotics are more appropriate than oral antibiotics.

How will they be given?

Before being discharged from hospital, a line that goes into your vein will be discussed with you, so that you can receive your treatment. You will be given a specific leaflet about your line and how to look after it. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call a member of the OPAT service.

Are there any side effects?

All medicines can have side effects. For possible side effects relating to your treatment, please refer to the patient information leaflet that can be found inside the box the medication comes in. If you experience any symptoms, please speak to a member of the OPAT service.

Symptoms include:

- Flushing of the skin
- Nettle rash (hives) anywhere on the skin
- Alterations in heart rate, palpitations
- Sudden dizziness or light headaches
- Abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting
- Sudden feeling of weakness

In very rare cases, some people may have an extreme allergic reaction to their medication. **This is called anaphylaxis.**

- Swelling of throat and mouth
- Difficulty in swallowing or speaking

If you experience any of the **anaphylaxis** symptoms **either during or after the administration of your medicine you should urgently dial 999** and explain that you are receiving IV antibiotics and think you may be having an allergic reaction.

What should I do if I feel unwell?

If you experience any of the following symptoms please let a member of the OPAT service, district nursing team or the hospital know as soon as possible.

- Raised temperature (fever) or shaking
- Dizziness, facial flushing or rash
- Sore throat, aching, headache, nausea or diarrhoea.

You should also inform OPAT/Community Nurses if:

1. Orthopaedic / plaster patients

- Increased pain or redness over your wound or operation site
- New or increased discharge or drainage from the wound or operation site.

2. Cardiology patients with endocarditis

- If you develop a cough
- If you feel more tired and physically exhausted.

3. Cellulitis/ severe soft tissue infection

- Increased swelling to area/affected limb
- The area of redness is spreading. If you think it is increasing, using a pen, draw around the area of redness to see if it spreads outside the marked area.
- Increased pain or new pain
- Blisters forming around affected area.