



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Rheumatology Telephone Advice Line

Information for patients

Tel: 0118 322 6574 (24/7 answerphone)

This leaflet explains how the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust's Rheumatology Telephone Advice Line works and what you can expect if you use it.

About us

The Advice Line is a service run by the Rheumatology Team at the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust.

There is a 24/7 answerphone, Tel: 0118 322 6574.

On Monday to Friday between 1pm and 3pm your call may be answered directly by a member of the team.

For rheumatology appointments, please contact the Clinical Admin Team on: Tel: 0118 322 7969 or email: rbb-tr.CAT9@NHS.net.

The Advice Line is not for emergencies

Please also see the Rheumatology FAQs, which may assist you:
<https://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/leaflets/rheumatology-medication-frequently-asked-questions-faq>

If you require urgent medical advice, you must contact your GP surgery, the NHS 111 helpline, your local walk-in centre or, if appropriate, your local Emergency Department (A&E).

How does the Advice Line work?

The Advice Line is an answerphone service that is available 24 hours a day. Messages will be accessed by the Rheumatology Team Monday-Friday 9am and 4pm (excluding bank holidays). We aim to respond to messages left within 5 working days.

If you are unavailable when the nurse returns your call, we will attempt to contact you a maximum of 3 times. After 3 unsuccessful attempts, you will need to contact the Advice Line again if you still need advice.

If your enquiry was in response to a DAWN message, we will try to contact you again, and please be aware that our number may be displayed as 'ID withheld' or 'spam' on your mobile.

When NOT to contact the Rheumatology Advice Line:

- For emergencies (see page 2).
- For non-rheumatology queries.
- To obtain test results, unless specifically asked to do so by the clinical team.

When to call the Advice Line:

- If you have a flare up of your condition that has not improved with your usual treatments and painkillers after 3 days.
- If you are experiencing side-effects, which you feel may be caused by the medications prescribed for your arthritis.
- If you experience a reaction to an injection given in the Rheumatology Clinic.
- If you have concerns about your symptoms, medications or treatment that need to be addressed before your next appointment.
- If you need to respond to a telephone message left by the DAWN Monitoring Team.

When leaving messages please remember:

- Your full name and date of birth.
- Your hospital number and / or NHS number.
- A telephone number where we can contact you during working hours.

Useful contacts and further information

- **RBFT Rheumatology Department FAQ:**
<https://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/leaflets/rheumatology-medication-frequently-asked-questions-faq>
- **NHS 111:** <https://111.nhs.uk/>
- **NHS website:** <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/rheumatoid-arthritis/living-with/>
- **NHS Covid-19 advice:** <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/covid-19/>
- **Arthritis Action:** 0203 781 7120 www.arthritisaction.org.uk
- **British Society of Rheumatology:** 0800 2987650
www.rheumatology.org.uk
- **Lupus UK:** 0170 873 1251 www.lupusuk.org.uk
- **National Ankylosing Spondylitis Society:** 0208 741 1515
www.nass.co.uk
- **National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society:** 0800 298 7650
www.nras.org.uk
- **Royal Osteoporosis Society:** 0808 800 0035
www.theros.org.uk
- **Versus Arthritis:** 0300 790 0400 www.versusarthritis.org

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RBFT Rheumatology, Siumkan Lee, Lead Nurse Rheumatology,
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