



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Rheumatology Telephone Advice Line Information for patients

The Rheumatology Telephone Advice Line

Telephone number 0118 322 6574.

Aim of the Rheumatology Telephone Advice Line

The purpose of this service is for access to advice and support for patients who attend the Rheumatology Department at The Royal Berkshire Hospital and related healthcare professionals. The service is operated by trained nurses who specialise in Rheumatology.

The Advice Line is not an emergency service

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

When should you call the Advice Line?

You should call the Advice Line:

- ▶ If you have a flare up of your condition that has not improved with your usual self-help treatments.
- ▶ 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.

Do not call the Advice Line:

- ▶ To confirm, change or cancel an outpatient appointment, please phone Clinical Admin Team 9 on 0118 322 7969 or email Rbb-tr.CAT9@NHS.net.
- ▶ To obtain test results, unless specifically asked to do so either by The DAWN Monitoring Team or at your last appointment.

How does the Advice Line work?

The Advice Line is an answer phone service that is available 24 hours a day. Messages will be accessed daily by a Rheumatology nurse, Mon-Fri between 9am and 4pm (excluding bank holidays). We aim to respond to messages left within two working days.

Depending on your enquiry, we may need to consult your hospital notes and / or one of the Rheumatology doctors before further advice can be given. If this is required it can take a few days to resolve but the nurse will call you back when the appropriate advice is available.

If you are out when the nurse returns your call, we will attempt to contact you one further time. If you still require further advice you will need to contact the Advice Line again.

If your enquiry was in response to a DAWN message that one of the nurses had left for you we will continue to try to make contact.

What information should your message contain?

- ▶ 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.
- ▶ Dates of your last and next Rheumatology appointment, or if you have been discharged back under the care of your GP.

Additional information

Additional detailed information about rheumatoid arthritis is available on the internet by logging on to:

Arthritis Research UK www.arthritisresearchuk.org Tel: 0300 790 0400

Arthritis Care www.arthritiscare.org.uk Helpline: 0808 800 4050

National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society www.nras.org.uk

Helpline: 0800 298 7650

The National Ankylosing Spondylitis Society, NASS Helpline: 020 8948 9177 email: asknass@nass.co.uk

Lupus UK www.lupusuk.org.uk Tel: 01708 731251

Local support groups

Arthritis Matters Reading www.arthritismattersreading.co.uk

Tel: 0118 977 6172

Fibromyalgia Support Group Tel: 07789 708 072 or 07768 614 309

(4pm-8pm only), email: reading.fibromyalgia@gmail.com

Self-referral psychological support

Talking Therapies Tel: 0300 365 2000

e-mail: talkingtherapies@berkshire.nhs.uk

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust

London Road

Reading RG1 5AN

Telephone 0118 322 5111

www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Rheumatology Department, March 2018

Review date: March 2020