

How long will my treatment last?

You may require only a few days of IV treatment or several weeks or months, depending on the nature of the infection. Often this may be followed by a further course of oral antibiotics. The OPAT nurse will explain to you how long you will need treatment for. During your time in the OPAT service you will be under the supervision of our OPAT coordinator, who will review your progress each week at a multidisciplinary team meeting.

Where do I get my ongoing supplies of medicine from?

The medicines could be supplied through the hospital pharmacy or you will be provided with a prescription by the community nurse for the supply of your antibiotics by the community pharmacy. The OPAT coordinator will inform you of the process applicable to you. The OPAT coordinator will be responsible for your intravenous antibiotic prescriptions. Please contact the OPAT nurse at the start.

What happens if I feel unwell, or I have a problem or concern?

Please do not hesitate to contact the OPAT coordinator if you have any concerns. Contact details are listed at the end of this leaflet. Complications on OPAT are rare but it is important to look after your IV line as directed. Very occasionally patients can get problems directly related to the antibiotic they are taking. This can occur whether you

are at home or in hospital. Some common things to look out for include the following:

- rash
- diarrhoea
- fever, feeling hot/cold, high temperature
- pain, redness and swelling around IV line
- blocked IV line.

If you feel unwell while at home with any of the symptoms above, please contact us on the numbers below and let us know so that we can treat you. In an emergency please call 999 for an ambulance or go to your nearest emergency (A&E) department.

Contact us:

If you have any questions or concerns about OPAT, please contact the Adult Single Point of Access on 0300 300 1710.

Your comments and concerns:

Tel: 0300 300 1711

Email: nelftcomplaints@nelft.nhs.uk

Complaints department, Suite 12, Phoenix House, Christopher Martin Road, Basildon, Essex SS14 3EZ.

Call NHS 111 (Tel: 111)

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

NHS Choices - www.nhs.uk

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.



Waltham Forest
Clinical Commissioning Group

Waltham Forest Antibiotic Outpatient Parenteral Therapy (OPAT) Service

This leaflet aims to provide you with information about the OPAT service. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is Outpatient Parenteral Antibiotic Therapy (OPAT)?

Antibiotics are used to fight against infections caused by bacteria. They can be given orally (by mouth) or injected into a vein. When antibiotics are injected, it is called intravenous (IV) or parenteral therapy. After consultation with the infectious diseases doctor or rapid response nurse, it has been decided that IV antibiotics are the best course of treatment for you. IV antibiotics are usually given to patients in hospital but they can be given safely in an outpatient clinic or at home.

When given in a clinic or at home, this is called OPAT (Outpatient Parenteral Antibiotic Therapy). If you are receiving OPAT at home then a nurse will visit your home daily to give you the dose or you (or a family member or friend) will be taught how to give the antibiotics.

How is the antibiotic given?

The antibiotic is given into your vein through a small narrow flexible tube called a catheter or IV line. The IV line is inserted into a vein using a needle. The needle is removed and the IV line is left in place and secured by a dressing.

There are different types of IV lines available and the one chosen for your treatment will depend on your veins and how long you will need the antibiotics. You will be given further information about the IV line used in your treatment and how to care for it by the Rapid Response nurse.

Before you are discharged from hospital, you will be given a plan for what to do if there are any issues with the IV line.

Who decides if I should go onto OPAT?

Patients being considered for the OPAT service will be those who are ready to go home from hospital but who need further IV antibiotic treatment, or those patients who have been identified in the community by the GP or community nurse. If the doctor looking after you thinks that you are suitable for the service then they will refer you to the OPAT coordinator.

There will be a discussion between the doctors and nurses caring for you to assess if you are suitable for treatment. The OPAT process will be fully explained to you so you can decide whether it is something that you would like to consider. If you agree to go onto the OPAT service then arrangements will be made to make sure you are able to go home safely.

What are the benefits of the OPAT service to me?

You will be able to be at home in a comfortable and familiar setting rather than staying in the hospital. It allows you to maintain your independence, be back with your family and friends or even return to work.

What are the risks to me?

Allergic reactions can occur with any medicine and therefore you should seek immediate medical attention if you develop any symptoms whilst at home such as a rash, facial swelling or difficulty in breathing. Occasionally the IV line can become blocked or an infection can develop. If there are any problems then contact the OPAT coordinator and you will be rapidly assessed and if necessary, readmitted back into hospital.

In an emergency, please call 999 for an ambulance, or go to your nearest emergency (A&E) department.

Who will give me the IV antibiotics and care for my line?

The OPAT service is provided by a community nurse on behalf of the Waltham Forest community provider North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) and will be tailored to your needs. These nurses will visit you in your home and administer your antibiotic.