



# Hypertension Clinic: appointment information

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## Information for patients from the Hypertension Clinic, Kent and Canterbury Hospital

You have been referred to East Kent Hospitals' Hypertension Clinic for specialist assessment of your raised blood pressure and advice on future medical care. This information sheet outlines what services our Hypertension Clinic provides.

### What happens at my first visit to the Hypertension Clinic?

You have been sent a letter inviting you to make an appointment to come to the clinic, along with this information sheet. If, after arranging it, the date or time of your appointment is not convenient, please let us know as soon as possible.

Your appointment may be face-to-face or may take place virtually, using a video or phone consultation. We prefer to make use of video consultation for first visits, but only if you agree and have the necessary equipment (smartphone, tablet, laptop, or PC with camera and microphone) and a reliable internet or 4G/5G connection.

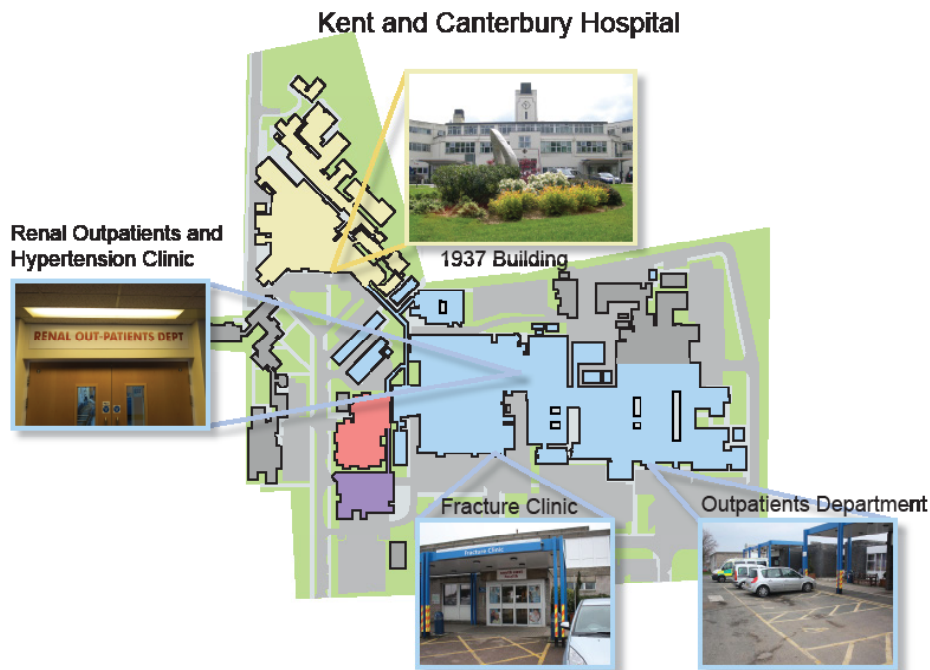
Dr Doulton has personally reviewed your referral and will have decided, using the information provided, whether your consultation can be done virtually or whether he needs to see you face-to-face to make a full assessment of your blood pressure.

If you are asked to attend virtually, please follow the instructions for using Attend Anywhere, which will be enclosed with your appointment letter. The web address for our department is <https://nhs.vc/eastkent/blood-pressure>

You can find the instructions on how to use Attend Anywhere on the Trust web site [www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/attend-anywhere/](http://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/attend-anywhere/)



The Hypertension Clinic takes place on a Thursday afternoon between 1.30pm and 5pm. If you have been asked to attend face-to-face, the clinic is held in the Renal Outpatients Department at Kent and Canterbury Hospital (off Junction 6 of the main corridor, next to Marlowe Ward and the X-ray department).



At your first visit you will be seen by Dr Doulton, who is a kidney specialist (nephrologist) and an accredited specialist of the British and Irish Hypertension Society.

Details of your blood pressure, its treatment, and investigation to date, plus your family's medical history and any of your lifestyle factors that are relevant, will be assessed at this appointment. Dr Doulton will provide you and your GP with advice on lifestyle and blood pressure medication, and will also arrange investigations, as needed.

### How will my blood pressure be measured and recorded?

If you are coming to hospital for a face-to-face appointment, your blood pressure will be taken by our clinic nurse. You will have readings in both arms, repeated several times, and when standing.

If you are attending 'virtually' we ask you take your blood pressure yourself before your appointment, if possible. Guidance on choosing home blood pressure monitors and how to measure your blood pressure at home is provided in our information sheet **High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)** available on the Trust web site [www.ekhufft.nhs.uk/renal-patient-leaflets/](http://www.ekhufft.nhs.uk/renal-patient-leaflets/) Please take the time to read this carefully.

We have developed a web-based portal that allows you to send us your blood pressure readings before your appointment. Please make sure we have your correct email address, so we can send you an email one to two weeks before your appointment with a unique link to this portal. The portal can be used with any device that has an internet connection. The link should be used for all future appointments.

If East Kent Hospitals do not have your email address, or if you are unsure about this, please contact us (contact details are at the end of this sheet). If you do not receive the email containing the link for the portal, please check your spam and/or junk mail folders. If you do not have access to email or you cannot find the link, please contact us for further advice.

If you are providing readings for your first visit, please tick the 'Is this your first readings for the blood pressure clinic?' box on the portal (see picture below). This will open a 'drop down' where you are asked to tell us about your height and weight, and provide blood pressure readings for both arms and when standing. Please provide further readings as detailed in the next paragraph.

Blood pressure at home

Is this your first reading for the blood pressure clinic?

Background Information

Your height   
Measure your height without shoes

Measure  cm  inches  
Indicate which measure you have used to enter your height with.

Your weight   
Measure  Kg  lbs (pounds)

Your first set of readings  
The first time you take your blood pressure, measure it in each arm

Left arm systolic

Left arm diastolic

Before your first visit we ask that you provide us with three blood pressure readings taken in the morning (between 6am and 10am, and before you take your blood pressure medication) and three readings taken in the evening (between 8pm and 10pm). These readings should be taken over **three consecutive** days during the week before your appointment. For **each set of three readings** (morning or evening on each day) please enter those readings into the portal and click the 'Submit this form' button at the bottom of the page.

At future follow-up visits you will be asked by Dr Doulton to provide readings over one day, three days or, very occasionally, over five to seven days. Again, please provide us with these readings before your appointment using the portal.

### How long will my visit take?

For your first visit we suggest you allow at least one hour for a face-to-face appointment; this allows more time to take blood pressure readings. For virtual appointments we suggest you allow 45 minutes. Follow-up appointment should take 15 to 20 minutes.

### What should I bring with me?

Please could you bring (or have to hand if a virtual consultation) a list of all your medication (including homeopathic, Chinese, and over the counter medicines) providing as much detail about your previous and current blood pressure tablets. This should include any drug side-effects you have experienced and the reasons why previous blood pressure medications have been stopped (for example side effects or the 'tablet didn't work').

Your GP or nurse practitioner may be able to provide you with this information. You can record this information in the attached proforma, if you wish.

## What type of tests will I have at the clinic?

At your first visit we may arrange for you to have a number of tests, looking for causes of your high blood pressure. Possible tests will include an MRI or CT scan to look at blood flow to your kidneys, blood and urine tests to look at hormone levels involved in controlling blood pressure, and urine tests which look for the presence of blood pressure lowering medications.

Some tests can be carried out on the day you attend the clinic and some will be done at a later date. We will explain where and how these will be done at your clinic appointment. In addition, we may ask you to have blood and/or urine tests before your clinic appointment. If these are necessary, the appropriate forms will be included with this information sheet.

The Hypertension Clinic shares services such as blood and urine tests, scans, and heart tracings (ECGs) with other hospital departments. As a result, you may sometimes have to wait for tests to be done. If the nurse or doctor that you see during your first appointment feels that you need an investigation urgently, they will explain this to you at the time and will be able to make the necessary arrangements for you.

## What happens after my first visit to the Hypertension Clinic?

- Following your clinic appointment, **a letter will be sent to your GP** which will include a summary of the advice given to you, any suggested changes to your tablets, and details of tests that we have arranged. **You will receive a copy of this letter.**

Unless the changes to your medication are medically urgent we would normally advise your GP on prescribing. Your GP will then contact you (by phone or letter) asking you to attend your GP surgery for a new prescription. If medication needs to be started sooner, a prescription will be given to you, to last you until you are able to get one from your GP.

- A **follow-up appointment** is usually booked one to three months later, either to discuss results of ongoing investigations, or to see how you are getting on. In some cases it is possible to arrange a future plan with just one visit.

## How do I contact the hypertension team?

- Secretary to Dr Doulton, Consultant Nephrologist and Hypertension Specialist  
Direct line number: 01227 86 42 29  
Email: [ekhuft.BPclinic@nhs.net](mailto:ekhuft.BPclinic@nhs.net)

**This leaflet has been produced with and for patients**

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

**Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments** please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email [ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net)

**Patients should not bring in large sums of money or valuables into hospital.** Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property had been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.

**Further patient leaflets** are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site [www.ekhufft.nhs.uk/patientinformation](http://www.ekhufft.nhs.uk/patientinformation)