

# Bringing your own medicines into hospital

This leaflet aims to answer your questions about bringing your own medicines into hospital. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a doctor, nurse, pharmacist or pharmacy technician caring for you.

## Why do I need to bring my medicines into hospital?

It is important you bring any medicines you use or take at home into hospital with you to:

- help us understand what medicines you are taking
- make sure the instructions on the medications labels are correct and the medicines are suitable for you to use
- make sure the right medicine is available at the right time to avoid missing any doses
- make sure you continue receiving familiar medicines
- make going home quicker and easier
- reduce waste of medicines in the NHS and help reduce environmental impact.

## What shall I bring in with me?

Medicines that you should bring in might include:

- tablets and capsules (including oral contraception)
- liquids
- injections
- insulin
- inhalers (puffers)
- sprays
- patches
- eye/ear/nose drops
- dosette/blister packs
- creams and ointments
- medicated shampoos
- any medicines you have bought from your local chemist, supermarket or health food/herbal shop (including herbal remedies and vitamins).

**Please make sure that the medicines are in their original packets or containers. Blister packs will only be used for information about your medication history.**

**If you have left your medications at home when you come into hospital, please ask a relative or friend to bring them in when they next visit.**

## **What happens when I come into hospital?**

When you come into hospital a doctor, nurse, pharmacist or pharmacy technician will check your medicines to find out what you are taking and how often. Sometimes more than one person will look at them. They may also ask your permission to contact your GP for more details.

If we find that some of your medicines are no longer needed or are not suitable, we will ask permission to remove them and explain why. If you still have supplies at home of the medicines that have been stopped, please give them to your local community pharmacist for safe disposal.

If there has been a change in dose of your medicine, we will re-label or re-supply it with new instructions.

## **Can I use my own medicines during my stay in hospital?**

Yes. Where possible, we will use your medicines and replace them if needed when you go home. Your medicines will be stored in a lockable cabinet at your bedside. Your nurse will have a key to this cabinet and will give you your medicines during your stay.

## **Going home from hospital**

When you are ready to go home:

- Medicines that the doctors think you no longer need will be shown to you to ask your permission for them to be destroyed on the ward.
- If you have less than 14 days' supply of any of your medicines left, we will give you an additional supply to take home with you.
- If any new medicines have been started during your hospital stay, we will also give you a supply of these to take home. This will allow time for your GP to receive the discharge letter which we will send them with information of any changes to your medication.
- If you have a blister pack/dosette box, we will also be contacting your community pharmacy and GP to send the discharge letter to them electronically.

You may take home a mixture of your own medicines and those supplied by the hospital. If this is the case, please take extra care as some packaging of the same medication/strength may look different.

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about bringing your own medicines into hospital, or if you are unsure about any of your medicines when you get home, please contact the pharmacy medicines information centre helpline in our pharmacy on 020 8725 1033 (Monday to Friday, 11am to 3pm).

Out of hours, please contact your GP or local community pharmacist. You can also ask ward staff any questions you have.

**For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)**

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## Additional services

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

### NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

**Web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

**Tel:** 111

### AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.

