

Emergency Department (A&E)

This leaflet explains about the Emergency Department (A&E). If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor, nurse or clinician caring for you.

What is the Emergency Department?

We treat patients who have suffered a recent injury or who have developed a sudden illness. All Emergency Departments use a priority system where the most seriously ill patients are seen first.

Will I be seen in the Emergency Department?

We may direct you somewhere else if your nurse / clinician thinks that your condition would be better managed elsewhere or if you need to be seen in a specialist area. This may include making an appointment with your own GP, a pharmacy or specialist department such as the early pregnancy assessment unit.

What is the process of being seen?

1. **Check-in** – If you arrive at the walk-in entrance, you will be greeted by a nurse / clinician who will ask you a few questions to assess the seriousness of your condition and direct you to the most appropriate service.
2. **Registration** – The receptionist will call your name and register you.
3. **Initial Assessment** – Some people need a further assessment after registration. A nurse / clinician may call your name to further assess your priority and may arrange for some tests.
4. **Treatment** – You will be directed to one of the treatment areas. You may be seen by a doctor, practitioner or other clinician. Not everyone is treated by the same members of the clinical team.

Children and Young People's Emergency Department – There is a separate team of nurses, doctors and clinicians who care for children and young people (under the age of 18). Children and young people register directly with reception and get assessed and managed in this department. Following assessment, some patients may be directed to the Urgent Treatment Centre.

Urgent Treatment Centre – Following assessment, you may be directed to the Urgent Treatment Centre. The Urgent Treatment Centre provides care for patients presenting with a minor injury or minor illness. You will be seen by either an emergency practitioner, doctor, or GP with specialist skills in injuries and illnesses, with care also provided by the nursing team. Patients are seen in priority and time order within the Urgent Treatment Centre and patients may be referred to a speciality team if required.

How long will I wait?

We are working hard to see you as quickly as possible. Please remember that waiting times can differ between treatment areas, specialists and due to prioritisation of patients. Other people may therefore be called before you. You can get an estimated waiting time using EDck.in (see below).

If you have been referred by your GP or another hospital to a particular specialist team, you will have to register at the Emergency Department. Although this team will be expecting you, they may not be able to see you immediately. This is because they cover the whole hospital and may be busy with another ill patient on a ward or in operating theatre.

If you have been advised to attend the Emergency Department by 111 you may have been given a scheduled arrival time. Please note that this is not an appointment time. However, we will endeavour to see you as soon as possible.

If your condition worsens while you are waiting, you have any concerns or you require any medication (for example for pain) please speak to a nurse.

Is the Emergency Department always the best place for treatment?

If you have been suffering from a medical problem for more than 48 hours, you should first try calling your GP surgery or NHS 111. Some conditions can also be managed by a local pharmacy (see below).

What is EDck.in?

St George's operates a digital self-assessment tool that allows you to tell us why you are here using your smartphone. The sooner we know why you have attended the ED the sooner we can help you. EDck.in also provides an estimated waiting time on your phone browser. The information you provide is sent directly to your confidential hospital record for the clinical staff to read. No personal information is stored after you have provided your answers.



Will I be required to pay for treatment?

Treatment provided in the Emergency Department is free apart from prescription charges for some patients. However, you may have to pay for any treatment outside the Emergency Department if you are visiting the UK or not living here on a lawful and settled basis. We have a legal duty to establish entitlement to free NHS treatment (outside the Emergency Department) and you may be asked to provide proof of entitlement.

Can I be accompanied by a relative or visitor?

Patients attending the Emergency Department can be accompanied by one visitor. There are exceptions to this if for example a patient is critically unwell. We ask that visitors remain mindful and respect that priority for seating should be given to patients. There may be times when our waiting area reaches capacity and we ask visitors to wait outside the department.

What if I require an interpreter or signer?

We offer telephone interpreting (foreign language). British sign language is also available for those with hearing impairments. If you require these services, please speak to a member of staff.

Useful services

Food and Drink – There are vending machines in the ED waiting room and several cafés and shops in the hospital; please ask staff for directions. There are water bottle filling stations in the ED waiting areas.

Toilets – There are toilets in the main waiting area including a disabled toilet. The toilets are checked and cleaned regularly. However, please do alert staff or use the electronic reporting screen outside the toilets if there is a problem.

Mobile phone charging – There are free mobile phone charging stations in the waiting areas.

Free patient and visitor Wi-Fi - The Wi-Fi service is listed as **nhsfreewifi** in the list of Wi-Fi networks on mobile devices.

Going home

We will send your GP a letter with details of your visit to the Emergency Department. Please ensure we have your correct contact details in case you need to be contacted for follow up. Please also ask any questions about your care, medication or further treatment before you leave. If you have any further questions regarding your medication after you leave, you can call the Medicines Information Patient Helpline 020 8725 1033 (11.00am to 3.00pm Monday to Friday).

Medicines

Your clinician may prescribe medicines for you to take home. The Outpatient Pharmacy is in Lanesborough Wing - ground floor. There are prescription charges in place for patients who are eligible to pay for their prescriptions. Pharmacy staff work hard to keep waiting times to a minimum, but please be aware that waiting times can at times exceed one hour.

Tel: 020 8266 6757

Opening hours: Monday to Friday: 9.00am to 5.30pm

Saturday / Sunday and Bank Holidays: 9.30am to 4.30pm

Patient information and advice

For patient information leaflets on conditions, procedures and treatments please visit

<https://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/patient-information-public/>

For further information regarding services offered at our hospitals, please visit

www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Transport

The hospital is well served by public transport. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide transport home for most patients. If you would like to order a taxi, there is a freephone in the waiting area.

Don't take your troubles home

If you have any concerns or questions concerning your stay and would like to discuss them further, please ask to speak to the nurse in charge or Matron.

Feedback on our service

We value your feedback to continue to improve our service. You will receive a text message to provide feedback on your experience in the next few days.

Additional services

Enhanced Primary Care Hub at Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton

For burns, cuts, grazes, wounds, earache, broken arm, sprained ankle etc., you can call to speak to an emergency practitioner and if appropriate they can book you an appointment to see them on the same day. The hub is open 8am to 8pm every day. The team is on hand to treat minor illnesses and injuries. NHS 111 and local GP services are also able to book you an appointment. This NHS service is for adults and children over two years of age.

Located at Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton Lane, London SW15 5PN Tel: 020 8725 0120.

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 **website:** <https://111.nhs.uk/>

Pharmacy First

Patients can now get treatment for seven common conditions directly from their local pharmacy, without the need for a GP appointment or prescription.

What are the seven common conditions?

- Sinusitis
- Sore throat
- Earache
- Infected insect bite
- Impetigo (a bacterial skin infection)
- Shingles
- Uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/pharmacies/how-pharmacies-can-help/>

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or care. You can contact the PALS team on the advisory telephone line Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 2pm to 5pm.

A Walk-in service is available:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and 4pm

Friday between 10am and 2pm.

Please contact PALS in advance to check if there are any changes to opening times.

The Walk-in and Advisory telephone services are closed on Wednesdays.

PALS is based within the hospital in the ground floor main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing.

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** 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

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (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.

Emergency Department Staff should be able to carry out their work without fearing for their safety. Anyone who is threatening or aggressive to Trust staff or who damages Trust property will be asked to leave by security. If appropriate, the Trust will take legal action and press for the maximum penalty.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN OUR HOSPITALS

St George's Hospital Charity funds a wide range of projects across our hospitals that make a real difference to staff and patients in southwest London. The charity does this by giving grants and raising funds to improve facilities at St George's and the communities which use it. From funding innovative medical research and raising money to purchase vital medical equipment, to improving the experience in hospital for patients and families, St George's Hospital Charity plays a crucial role.

If you wish to donate the Emergency Department charity fund, please see below link, and enter 'Emergency Department' into the department you would like to support. Donations are greatly appreciated.

<https://www.stgeorghospitalcharity.org.uk/donate/support-your-ward-or-department>

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