

Outpatient Parenteral Antibiotic Therapy (OPAT)

Aintree University Hospital 

NHS Foundation Trust

Pharmacy Department
Lower Lane
Liverpool L9 7AL
Tel: 0151 525 5980

You have been prescribed some antibiotics as part of the hospital's OPAT service. This leaflet will explain what this means.

What is OPAT?

OPAT stands for 'Outpatient Parenteral Antibiotic Therapy' and it is a way of giving you antibiotic injections without you having to stay in hospital for the full course of treatment.

Who decides if I should get OPAT?

You will be considered for OPAT if you are ready to go home but still need more antibiotic injections to treat an infection.

OPAT is not always the best choice for everyone and your doctors will discuss your case with you and an infection doctor to decide if the service is right for you.

What antibiotic will I be given?

The antibiotic that is chosen for you will depend on the type of infection you have and what bugs or germs are causing it. This will be explained to you during your hospital stay.

Specific information about the antibiotic you are given will be provided to you with your prescription as a separate leaflet.

The hospital's pharmacy department will supply the full course of your treatment when you leave.

How are the antibiotics given?

The antibiotics will be given to you as an injection or drip into your vein through a small tube called a catheter.

The type of catheter chosen for you will depend on your needs and it will be

removed when you no longer need the antibiotics.

Community nurses will administer the antibiotics either at your home or at a clinic near to where you live.

You will be told about the exact arrangements when you are ready to go home.

Everyone receiving OPAT needs weekly blood tests to check that the antibiotics are working and that you are not being given too much or too little. This will be done by the community nurses.

How long will I need treatment for?

The length of your treatment will depend on the infection. Some people only need a few days, whilst others will need several weeks.

The planned length of treatment will be written in your discharge letter and given to you along with your medicines.

You will need to be reviewed by your hospital doctor before you finish treatment to make sure that your infection has fully healed.

What are the benefits of OPAT?

Being given antibiotics in this way will mean that you be able to return to your normal home life faster and not have to stay in hospital to finish your treatment.

What are the drawbacks of OPAT?

A small number of patients develop allergic reactions to antibiotics, such as a rash, swelling or difficulty breathing.

To stop this happening the first dose will be given whilst you are in hospital to make

sure that you don't react badly and that it is safe for you to go home.

Sometimes the catheter used to administer the medicine can become blocked or infected.

If you experience any problems with your catheter, or you think that you are having a reaction to your antibiotic then contact the Community Intravenous Therapy Team (contact details are given below).

One of the antibiotics commonly used (**ceftriaxone**) can stop certain blood glucose monitors from working properly. This only affects **Accu-Chek®** monitors.

If you are diabetic and use an **Accu-Chek®** monitor to check your blood glucose and have been prescribed **ceftriaxone** then tell a member of hospital staff.

You will need to use an alternative device for the duration of your treatment.

Who can I contact if I have any concerns or need further information?

Complications with OPAT are rare but if you have any concerns then please don't hesitate to contact the Community Intravenous Therapy Team (Monday – Sunday 08:00 – 20:00) on **0151 285 4696**.

If you have any questions about the medicines you have been prescribed by Aintree University Hospital then you can speak to one of our pharmacists by calling our Pharmacy Medicines Hotline (Monday – Friday 08:30 – 17:00) on **0151 529 3208**.

In the event of an emergency please dial **999** for an ambulance or go to your nearest Accident and Emergency department.



If you require a special edition of this leaflet

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille, on audio tape or disk and in other languages on request. Please:

0151 529 8564
listening@aintree.nhs.uk

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