

Tests Arranged by the Hospital

Usually, *the responsibility for following up and communicating a test result lies with the clinician who has requested the test.*

If a test is arranged in *hospital*, it is the responsibility of the *hospital* to communicate the result of this test to **you**.

Hospital test results are NOT sent directly to the GP!

Both the GP, **and you**, will receive any results in the form of a letter summarising the outcomes of any investigations you have had – **at the same time!**

Unfortunately, sometimes a patient is told by hospital staff that they should;

“Follow up your (hospital) test results with your GP”.

It is highly unusual for this to be the appropriate advice.

- **Before you leave the hospital, please ask how long the test results may take to come and how they will be communicated to you.**
- **If you wait for hospital test results longer than you were expecting; *please contact the hospital clinic or consultant’s secretary directly to chase these.***
- **Do not ring the practice about them because the results from the hospital will not be there!!**

PLEASE REMEMBER

GP practices and Hospitals do their best to make sure that there is appropriate follow up of test results **but** things can go wrong.

Results can go missing.

Abnormal results might not be followed up appropriately for some reason.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

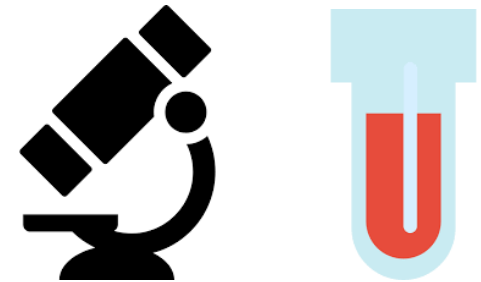
TAKE RESPONSIBILITY:

Make a note of any tests you have had, what you were told about them

AND REMEMBER

to check for the results

Test Results



**How to get them
and why you should
follow them up**



This leaflet is one of the projects by the Bicester Health Centre Patient Participation Group to help practice and patients. Each GP practice in England has a Patient Participation Group which you can join.

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Tests are arranged for your benefit and to help manage your health. Please help yourself and the NHS by following up test results and making sure that you understand what the results mean and what to do. **If in doubt ask! We are here to help you.**

Tests arranged by your GP or Practice Nurse

Blood, urine tests, x-rays and ultra-sounds are commonly arranged by your GP or Practice Nurse. **Please ask how long the results may take to come back and how to follow these up.** Your GP may ask that you follow these up by ringing reception for the results, coming back to see the GP in clinic, or to follow up on the telephone.

You **must** follow the instructions given. Failure to do so could mean that you do not follow up an important or abnormal result.

Why do I have to bother? Surely “no news is good news” and the GP will contact me if it’s important?

There are several reasons that you must take responsibility for following up any tests that have been arranged on your behalf. These include:

(1) The test results **might be missing** because of human or computer errors!!

We do not currently have the technology to check that every individual test request comes back to us. Remember “no news” may mean a missing test rather than normal result.

(2) The GP may leave important information with the test result such as a request that you follow up with the doctor/nurse in clinic or on the telephone.

(3) You may have been given instructions to follow based on your test result, such as “if your x-ray is normal then you should see a physiotherapist”, so you will need to know your results to act on this advice.

Who should I ring and when?

Please call reception in the afternoon (after 3.00pm is usually less busy). Please check that **all** the results you are expecting are back.

When I ring: How does the GP reviewing my test results communicate the outcome to me?

If a result is normal, or only shows minor **abnormalities** of no clinical significance, the GP will usually leave a comment attached to the result stating either “normal” or “Result acceptable, no change in management plan”. This means that any prior arrangements or plans do **not** need to be changed. For example, if the plan was that you would be reviewed in one year again (if test results normal), then no change from that plan is

needed. If you were asked to follow the results up with the GP, then you still need to do this.

If there is a significant abnormality that will need to be followed up (and follow up plans have not already been arranged) the GP may leave a message for reception asking for further tests, for a telephone or clinic consultation with you, or leave a specific message for reception to give you when you ring up.

Can I see my test results on a computer at home by accessing my notes remotely?

This facility has been made available to some patients with conditions requiring regular monitoring (such as diabetes). **After** the change of computer systems in **October 2018**, you will be able to register your interest for access.

Can I follow up my test results when I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT FOR something else? Usually, it is best to have **one consultation** for **one issue**. If you have been asked to follow up a test result, **make** your clinic or telephone appointment for this purpose - **tell** the GP why you have come (e.g. “I am here to follow up my scan result”). If you come with another problem, there is a risk that recent important or abnormal test results (and their clinical context) are not thoroughly reviewed by the GP with you.