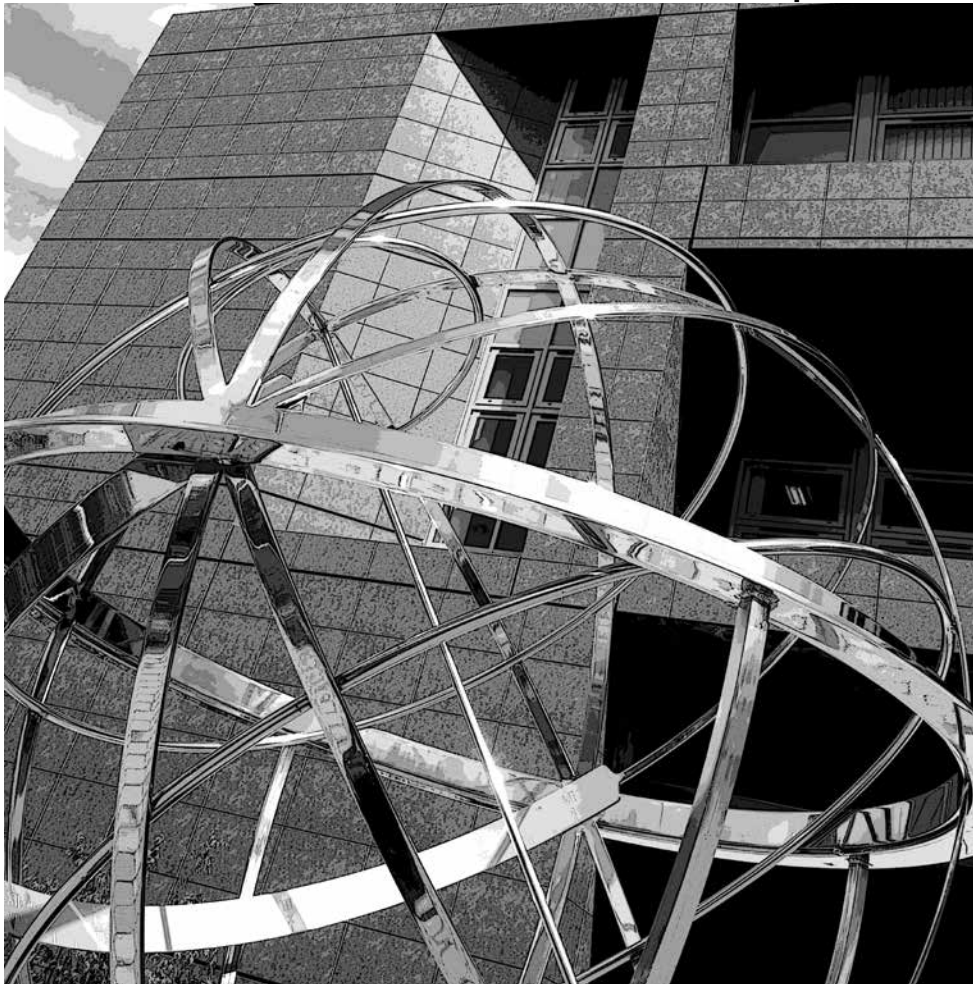


Oxford Centre for Head and Neck Oncology

Information about the Thyroid Team

Information for patients



If you have been told that you have thyroid cancer and need treatment, it is important that you understand what this treatment might involve. This leaflet contains general information about what to expect. We also encourage you to speak to any member of the team if you have further questions.

The team involved in your treatment are:

Consultant Endocrine Surgeon

Mr Greg Sadler

Mr Radu Mihai

Miss Isabel Quiroga

Consultant Oncologist

Dr Andrew Weaver

Consultant Radiologists

Dr Fergus Gleeson

Consultant Histopathologist

Dr Derek Roskell

Dr. Ben Phillips

Dr. Lucie Winter

Chemical Pathologist

Dr Brian Shine

Superintendent Radiographer

Mrs Jane Statham

Endocrinologist

Head and Neck Specialist Nurses

Miss Yun Li

Mrs Jacky Rawlings

Speech and Language Therapists

Mrs Carol Harris

Mrs Caroline Fraser

Following your cancer diagnosis, your test results and medical history are discussed in a multi-disciplinary team meeting (MDT). All of the Thyroid team will be at this meeting, to plan a programme of treatment specific to you.

The surgical team will carry out any operation you might need. The oncologists provide radiotherapy, chemotherapy or radioactive iodine treatment. It is normal for people undergoing this sort of treatment to need help from other specialists, both before the treatment and afterwards. In this hospital we all work as a team, each with our own role to play, as described below.

Head and neck Specialist Nurse

It is the role of the head and neck Specialist Nurses to support you when you need it, from diagnosis and throughout your treatment. When you receive your diagnosis and at each stage of your care pathway, your head and neck Specialist Nurse will give you information about the treatment options available, so that you can decide what is best for you. They can give you practical advice and information about any aspect of your illness or treatment. They will also act as a link for you between home, the local health care team and hospital. **They can be contacted on 01865 234 346.**

If you would like to meet someone who has had similar treatment, ask the head and neck Specialist Nurses, who will be pleased to organise this for you.

Key worker

The key worker will be your main point of contact with the hospital. They will be involved in co-ordinating your care. This role is usually carried out by the Specialist Nurses, but this person may change as your needs change. We will let you know when this happens.

Dietitian

It is the Dietitian's job to make sure that you are receiving all the nutrients that your body needs. This is particularly important if you are going to have any treatment. This is when you need to be as strong as possible so that your immune system is working as well as it can and any wounds heal well afterwards.

If you are experiencing difficulty with eating or drinking, or have lost weight, the Dietitian may give you advice about:

- suitable foods to eat
- adding extra nourishment to your food
- supplement drinks
- balanced meals.

Speech and Language Therapist

This service is available if you are experiencing speech, voice or swallowing problems that are affecting your communication and/or eating and drinking. It is possible that your voice (vocal folds) may be affected by thyroid surgery. A weak voice may affect your communication. Damage to your vocal folds can also make swallowing liquids more difficult, causing you to cough.

Normally these changes in voice and swallowing are temporary. However, if your voice and/or swallowing difficulty continues the Speech and Language Therapist will be able to see you for an assessment. You may need an examination of your larynx before speech and language therapy starts to find out if your vocal folds have been affected by surgery.

What you can do to help

While you are waiting for your treatment, there are things that you can do to help.

- If you are a smoker, then try to stop smoking. All GP's surgeries have a smoking cessation advisor who will help support you through any attempt to quit smoking. They can also advise you about nicotine replacement, which is available on prescription.
- Reduce your alcohol intake to a maximum of 3 units per day. If you need support to reduce your alcohol intake, please speak to the Specialist Nurses.
- Eat a well-balanced, high calorie diet. If this is not possible, follow the advice given by your Dietitian.
- Seek and accept support from your family and friends – you will need their help to get you through. Talk about your diagnosis and what the treatment involves.
- Feel free to bring a relative or friend with you to the clinic visits. They may be able to support you and help remember what has been discussed.
- Write down any questions you or your family have, so that we can answer them next time you come to the hospital.
- Visit your dentist – it is important that your teeth are checked before you start your treatment.
- Visit the **Maggie's Cancerlinks** website:
<http://oxford.cancerlinks.maggiescentres.org/>
For head and neck information go to cancer types then click on head and neck or thyroid.
- You may want to contact **Heads2gether**:
Head and Neck Cancer Support group. H2G members have already made the journey from diagnosis to recovery.
Website: www.heads2gether.net
Tel: 0800 023 4550

- Speak to your GP about a prescription exemption certificate. Having a cancer diagnosis entitles you to free prescriptions.

Questions or further information

This is a lot of information for you to take in. If you have any questions or concerns, or need any further information, then please contact:

Yun Li and Jacky Rawlings

Head and Neck Specialist Nurses

Tel: **01865 234 346** (Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 4.00pm)

You can also get further information and support from the Maggie's Cancer Information Centre at the Churchill Hospital, Oxford on 01865 751 882.

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

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