

Rheumatology Department  
Whytemans Brae Hospital  
Kirkcaldy  
Telephone number – 01592 647957

### **The Rheumatology Clinic**

Patients attending the Rheumatology clinic for the first time are asked to read the following information regarding your visit. This tells you what will happen at your appointment and why we ask you to bring certain things with you.

If you have any questions for your doctor, you may find it helpful to write them down and bring them to your appointment with you.

Please note that your first appointment in the rheumatology clinic can last between 30 minutes and 2 hours.

- When you arrive in the hospital you should make your way to out patient reception on the ground floor and book in. This allows the nursing staff at the clinic to know you have arrived.
- Once you have booked in at reception you will be directed to the correct clinic waiting area.
- The clinic nursing staff will call you to check your blood pressure, weight, height and urine sample.
- The doctor you are seeing in the clinic will then call you in to be seen.

During the clinic visit you will be asked a number of questions about how your symptoms started. All patients will then be examined. Please note that all joints will usually be examined and you will be asked to undress down to your underwear for this.

You may also be sent to the x-ray department, have an ultrasound scan of your joints and may also have blood tests taken.

At the end of your clinic visit the doctor will usually give you written information about your condition and any medication that may have been started. On occasion this will be sent to you after the clinic visit.

If the doctor who sees you at the clinic wishes to review you in clinic then a further appointment will be sent by post to you.

If you have any questions about your appointment, please contact us on the above number.

## **1. Why do I need to bring an updated medication list?**

In clinic we do not have access to your GP records. Therefore any changes to your medication from the time your GP referred you to the clinic will not be known to us. This can lead to delays or errors in medication changes recommended at your clinic visit.

It is very helpful to remember to bring an updated medication list for all your clinic appointments.

If you are using complementary medicine or buying supplements over the counter (e.g cod liver oil, glucosamine) then bring a list of these as well.

## **2. Why do I need to have my blood pressure checked?**

It is a chance to screen all patients for high blood pressure. If your blood pressure is found to be high at clinic then your GP will be asked to recheck it at your local surgery.

Leaving high blood pressure untreated increases your risk of heart attacks and strokes.

The drugs used to treat joint problems can sometimes cause high blood pressure.

## **3. Why do I need to bring a urine sample**

- **We check for sugar loss**

If you lose sugar into your urine it may mean you have high levels of sugar in your blood, this is called diabetes.

Some drug therapy used in treating arthritis (steroids) can increase your risk of diabetes. Being overweight can also increase your risk and can sometimes be a problem for people with arthritis due to reduced activity.

- **We check for protein loss**

There can be a number of causes for this. This can be seen with urine infections. Infections are more common in some people with inflammatory arthritis. If infection is suspected then a fresh urine sample is often asked for and sent to the lab for analysis

Rarely finding protein in the urine sample may be due to a problem with how your kidneys are working. This always needs further investigation, with blood and further urine checks.

- **We check for blood loss**

There can be a number of causes for this. This can be seen with urine infections, some medications or problems with your kidney and bladder system. Kidney and bladder problems should always be investigated.

- **We check for white cells**

The commonest cause of this finding is infection or recently treated infection.