

Your virtual ward: Chest infection

This leaflet is for patients who have been discharged home following a diagnosis of chest infection (pneumonia). It explains how you can monitor yourself at home to make sure your body's oxygen levels, heart rate, body temperature, and blood pressure remain safe.

Virtual ward tel: 0118 322 5201 (9am-5pm, Mon-Sun)

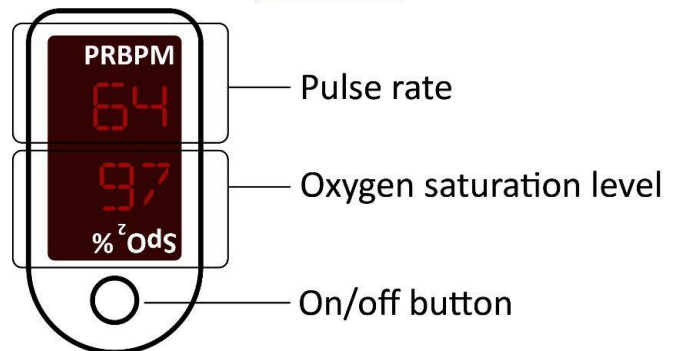
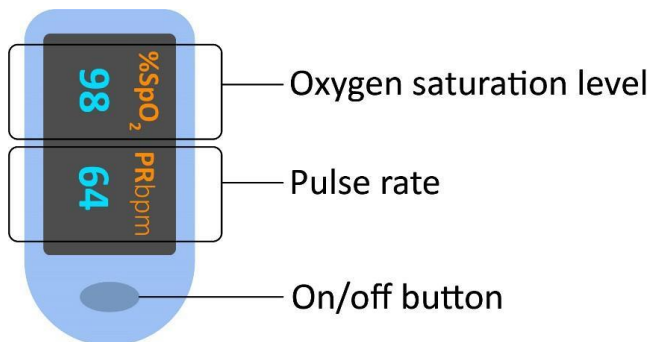
Out of hours: 111 or 999

What is a virtual ward?

The purpose of our virtual ward is to monitor you while allowing you to stay in the comfort of your own home. Your clinician has determined that you are safe to go home today, but some people may get worse. For this reason, you were given a pulse oximeter, a temperature probe, and a blood pressure monitor. By checking the readings on these devices, we can make sure that you are improving. If you do become more unwell, we can take appropriate actions in a timely manner.

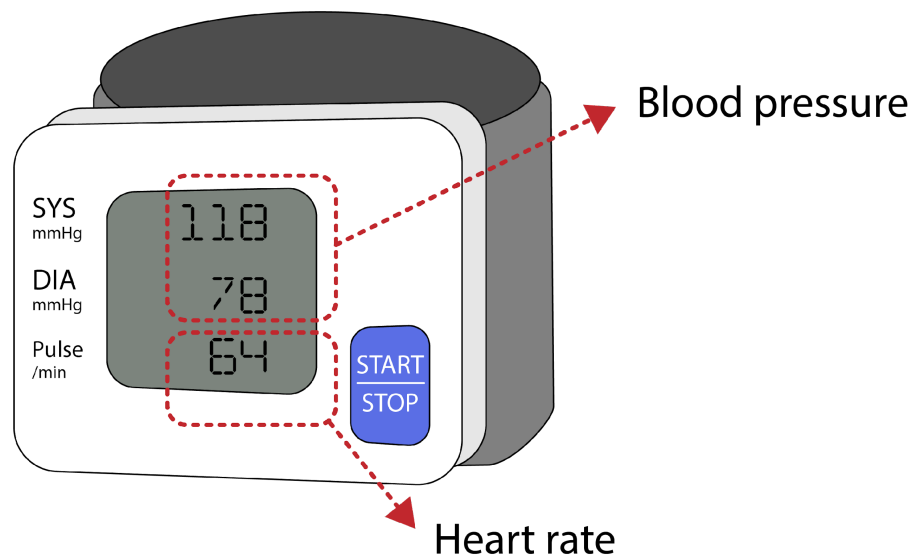
Using your pulse oximeter

- Clip the oximeter onto your finger
- Make sure your fingers are warm
- Remove any nail varnish before attaching the probe
- Sit up straight and rest for a few minutes before taking measurements
- After 5–10 seconds, the probe will give you two different numbers – an oxygen saturation level (abbreviated to SpO₂) and a pulse rate (abbreviated to PR or BPM)
- Make a note of both readings



Using your blood pressure monitor

- Ensure you are sat down comfortably and rest for a few minutes before taking the readings.
- Attach the cuff to your wrist, against your skin (and not over clothing).
- Press the START/STOP button to start measuring your blood pressure – the cuff will pump up, which may feel a bit uncomfortable for a short period.
- The monitor will give you three readings.
 - The top two readings are your blood pressure.
 - The bottom number is your heart rate.
- The full manual can be found if you search on the internet for “Omron RS7 manual” or ask us to email you a copy of it.



Using your temperature probe

Please see the attached instruction manual on how to set up your temperature device so you can monitor your temperature while you are at home.

Recording oxygen levels, heart rate, temperature, and blood pressure

- Record your oxygen levels, your heart rate and your blood pressure 4 times a day.

Day	Morning				Midday				Afternoon				Evening			
	Oxygen	Heart rate	Blood pressure	Temperature	Oxygen	Heart rate	Blood pressure	Temperature	Oxygen	Heart rate	Blood pressure	Temperature	Oxygen	Heart rate	Blood pressure	Temperature
1																
2																
3																
4																
5																

Virtual appointments

- Our team will phone you every day until we determine you are getting better.
- We will ask about your symptoms and ask you to give us your readings
- If you have not heard from us by 1 pm on the first day after you were sent home from hospital, call our virtual ward phone number (at the top of the first page)

Alarm signs and what to do next

Seek help via our virtual ward number, 111 or 999 in the following cases:

Compassionate

Aspirational

Resourceful

Excellent

- If your oxygen saturations are **persistently 94% or less**.
- If the top number of your blood pressure is **persistently less than 100**.
- If your heart rate at rest is **persistently greater than 110**.
- If your temperature is persistently **greater than 38 degrees** and not coming down with paracetamol
- If you have **diarrhoea and/or vomiting**.
- If you are **more short of breath**.
- If you develop **worsening chest pain**.

Your antibiotics

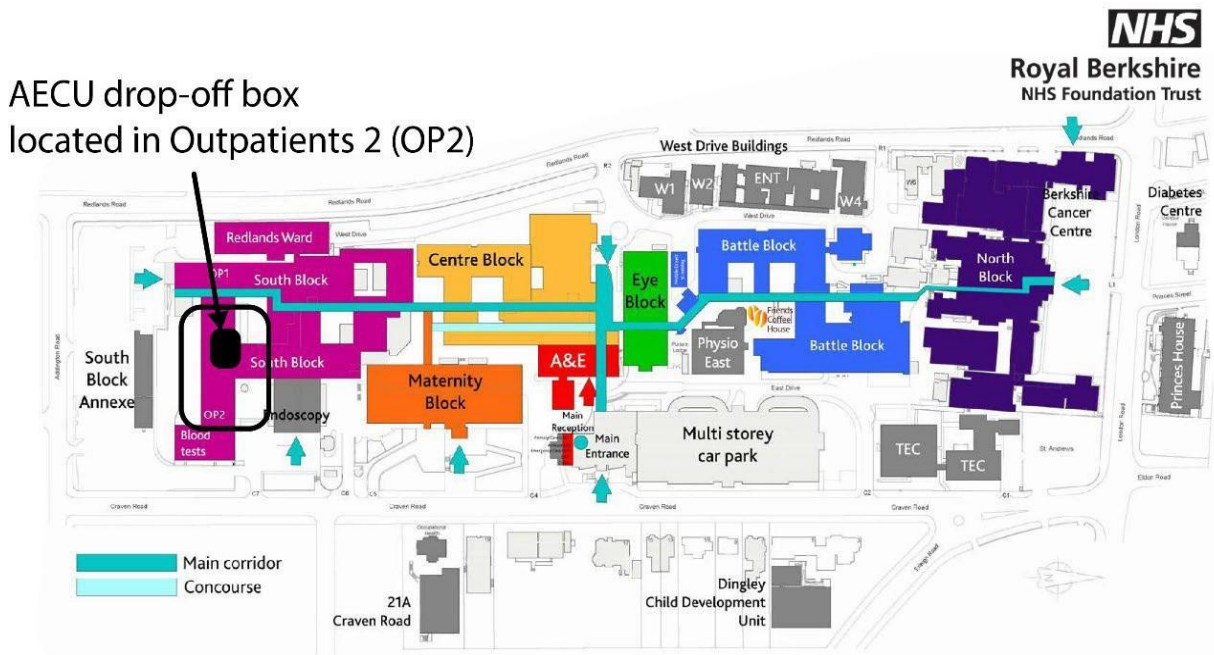
- It is important that you take your antibiotics exactly as prescribed.
- If you are struggling with keeping anything down because you feel nauseous, let us know and we can prescribe some anti-sickness medications.
- Even if you start feeling better, you should finish your course of antibiotics.

Returning your devices

Once you have recovered, please return all the devices to the drop-off box inside the Ambulatory Emergency Care Unit (AECU) in South Block– see map. Open Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm.

Do not go to the Emergency Department (A&E).

If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to call our virtual ward number – 0118 322 5201 – we are happy to help as we know this can be very stressful and scary.



AECU drop-off box
located in Outpatients 2 (OP2)

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

Acute Medical Unit (AMU), June 2021

Next review due: March 2023