

Your virtual ward: Alcohol detox

This leaflet is for patients who have been discharged home following a stay in hospital with alcohol withdrawal. It explains how we continue to monitor you at home to make sure your withdrawal symptoms are well controlled and you remain safe.

Virtual ward phone: 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. Stopping alcohol after drinking regularly can give you withdrawal symptoms. You have been started on medications for your withdrawal symptoms and have been assessed as stable enough to complete your detox at home. Before you are discharged from hospital, we will show you how to videocall us from your smart phone/device. **We will videocall you twice a day** to assess your symptoms and advise you on how much medications to take to control them. We are also able to prescribe you more medications to treat your withdrawal, if you need them.

It is very important
that you
Do Not Drink Any
Alcohol
DURING YOUR
DETOX.

If you do drink
alcohol, please
inform your virtual
ward staff **AS SOON**
AS POSSIBLE.

Important detox symptoms

During your twice daily videocalls, we will be assessing the following symptoms:

- Tremor (shaking of the hands)
- Sweating
- Hallucinations (seeing things that are not real)
- Orientation to time, person and place
- Mood (calm, anxious or panicked mood)

Recording your symptoms

We also advise you to record your symptoms yourself four times a day – in the morning, the afternoon, the evening, and before going to bed. You can also record your symptoms at night if you cannot sleep.

Virtual appointments

- Our team will videocall you twice a day, until your symptoms have resolved.
- We will ask about your symptoms and can prescribe you more medications to control your symptoms, if needed.
- If you have not heard from us by 1pm 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 111 or 999 in the following cases:

- If you have episodes of blackouts or faints.
- If you have a seizure (fit) – this is an event where you suddenly lose consciousness and fall onto the floor; you may shake during this episode as well.
- If you have persistent vomiting and are struggling to keep your medications down.
- During working hours, you can also call our virtual ward number if you are not sure.

First aid for seizures (fit): advice for people witnessing a seizure

Please go through this section with the person you live with / your carer and have it easily accessible as it gives important advice for use during a seizure.

Call 999 for an ambulance. It might be scary to witness, but do not panic.

- Only move them if they're in danger, such as near a busy road or hot cooker.
- Cushion their head if they're on the ground.
- Loosen any tight clothing around their neck, such as a collar or tie.
- Turn them on to their side after their fit stopped.
- Stay with them and talk to them calmly until they recover.
- Note the time the seizure starts and finishes.
- Do not put anything in their mouth, including your fingers. They should not have any food or drink until they have fully recovered.

**If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate
to call our virtual ward number**

0118 322 5201

Date and time	Tremor 'Shaking'			Sweating			Hallucinations 'Seeing things that are not real'			Orientation to time, person and place			Mood		
	None	On movement	At rest	None	Moist	Drenching	None	Know they are not real	Unable to tell apart hallucinations from reality	Orientated	Unsure	Not orientated	Calm	Anxious	Panicked

Date and time	Tremor 'Shaking'			Sweating			Hallucinations 'Seeing things that are not real'			Orientation to time, person and place			Mood		
	None	On movement	At rest	None	Moist	Drenching	None	Know they are not real	Unable to tell apart hallucinations from reality	Orientated	Unsure	Not orientated	Calm	Anxious	Panicked

Compassionate Aspirational Resourceful Excellent

Date and time	Tremor 'Shaking'			Sweating			Hallucinations 'Seeing things that are not real'			Orientation to time, person and place			Mood		
	None	On movement	At rest	None	Moist	Drenching	None	Know they are not real	Unable to tell apart hallucinations from reality	Orientated	Unsure	Not orientated	Calm	Anxious	Panicked

Acute Medical Unit (AMU), March 2021
 Next review due: March 2023