



University Hospitals Bristol  
NHS Foundation Trust

Patient information service  
Bristol Royal Hospital for Children  
Bristol Heart Institute

# Pulmonary hypertension



Respecting everyone  
Embracing change  
Recognising success  
Working together  
**Our hospitals.**

  
**Above  
& Beyond**  
Fundraising for Bristol city centre hospitals

# Pulmonary hypertension clinic

You have been referred to the pulmonary hypertension clinic. Whether you are new or having a follow-up, you will have several tests and this appointment is likely to last for three hours.

Such tests are:

- 6 minute walk test (see how far you can walk in 6 minutes)
- ECG (electrical test of your heart rhythm)
- Echo (ultrasound scan of your heart)
- Consultation

Prof. Tulloh  
(UH Bristol)

Dr Shahin Moledina for children  
(Great Ormond Street) or

Dr Howard for adults  
(Hammersmith Hospital)

There are other tests that may be performed at another time.

## **What is Pulmonary Hypertension (PH)?**

PH is a condition where there is high blood pressure in the pulmonary arteries. These are the blood vessels carrying blood from the heart to the lungs. These blood vessels can become smaller from thickening of the wall.

## **How serious is PH?**

PH can cause damage to the heart, which becomes weaker. This means that the heart's ability to pump blood around the body is reduced and less oxygen is delivered to the muscles and organs. If left untreated, PH is life threatening and can result in heart failure.

## **What are the main symptoms of PH?**

The most common symptoms are shortness of breath with mild exertion, fainting and tiredness. Some people are followed up with PH from childhood.

# What are the main types of PH in children and adults?

## 1. Idiopathic PH

There is no clear cause although occasionally it runs in families and may be linked with a gene known as BMPR2 mutation.

## 2. PH related to other conditions

It is caused by another pre-existing condition, such as an abnormality of the heart present from birth, chronic lung disease, connective tissue disease, repeated blood clots in the lungs and sickle cell disease.

## How is ph diagnosed?

The tests (overleaf) will be performed and then you will have the consultation. It might be necessary to book further tests at another time. These might include a chest X-ray, lung function tests (breathing tests) and a cardiac catheterisation to confirm the diagnosis.

Other tests may be requested such as blood tests, chest computer tomography (CT), cardiac magnetic resonance test, or a ventilation-perfusion scan.

The nature of these tests will be explained to you in detail if they are required.

# What are these tests?

## ECG

This is a quick test, in which small stickers that are connected to an ECG machine are stuck on the arms, legs and chest. It provides information about the rhythm and electrical activity of the heart.

## Echocardiogram

This is a scan that produces high frequency sound waves creating an image of the heart. It can be used to estimate the lung artery pressure and look at how well the heart is working.

## Chest X-ray

This is an Imaging technique in which radiation is used to produce a black and white image of the chest structure. It helps to assess the size of the heart and exclude other conditions.

## Cardiac catheterisation

This procedure is carried out using a thin flexible tube (catheter) from the veins in the neck, arm or groin to the right side of the heart and into the pulmonary arteries. This will allow us to measure the blood pressure in these arteries.

# What are the treatments?

After this, we will need to talk to you to decide whether treatment is required. A number of medications are used for the treatment of PH if needed.

## Research

Please talk to one of the team if you would like to be involved in research to find out more about this condition.

## Further information

<http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/pulmonary-hypertension>

[www.pulmonary-hypertension.org.uk](http://www.pulmonary-hypertension.org.uk)

[www.chfed.org.uk](http://www.chfed.org.uk)

[www.phassociation.uk.com](http://www.phassociation.uk.com)

## Contact details

Professor Robert Tulloh,  
Consultant in Congenital Cardiology  
University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust  
Upper Maudlin Street  
Bristol  
BS2 8BJ

Email: [Robert.Tulloh@uhbristol.nhs.uk](mailto:Robert.Tulloh@uhbristol.nhs.uk)

### Adults

Clinic: **0117 342 6502**

Nurses: **0117 342 6657**

### Children

Clinic: **0117 342 8856**

Nurses: **0117 342 8578**

Please note that if for any reason you would value a second opinion concerning your diagnosis or treatment, you are entirely within your rights to request this.

The first step would usually be to discuss this with the doctor or other lead clinician who is responsible for your care.

Smoking is the primary cause of preventable illness and premature death. For support in stopping smoking contact **Smokefree Bristol** on **0117 922 2255**.

As well as providing clinical care, our Trust has an important role in research. This allows us to discover new and improved ways of treating patients.

While under our care, you may be invited to take part in research. To find out more please visit:  
**[www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/research-innovation](http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/research-innovation)**  
or call the research and innovation team on  
**0117 342 0233**.

For access to other patient leaflets and information please go to the following address:

**[www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/information-for-patients/](http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/information-for-patients/)**

**Hospital switchboard: 0117 923 0000**



**Minicom: 0117 934 9869**



**[www.uhbristol.nhs.uk](http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk)**



For an interpreter or signer please contact the telephone number on your appointment letter.



For this leaflet in large print, audio or PDF format, please email [patientleaflets@uhbristol.nhs.uk](mailto:patientleaflets@uhbristol.nhs.uk).

