

I'm a smoker—what are the benefits of quitting

Smokers are at risk of potentially serious complications during and after surgery that can affect the lungs and heart. You're also more likely to suffer problems related to the general anaesthetic, which is vital in many surgical procedures.

Fighting any infection is more difficult for a smoker, while the risk of breathing problems increases too. There is also a greater chance of a longer stay in hospital. The wounds and bones in smokers take longer to heal.

There is a one in three risk of smokers experiencing breathing problems after an operation, but by stopping smoking at least eight weeks before, the risk drops dramatically to one in 10.

Between five and 15 years after quitting, your risk of suffering a heart attack or stroke is that of a non-smoker and after 20 years the risk of you dying from lung disease or smoking-related cancer is reduced to that of a 'never smoker'.

I'm overweight and classed as obese—what are the benefits of losing weight?

Your risk of suffering a serious complication during or after your operation can be increased if you suffer from obesity-related diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, obstructive sleep apnoea, history of thrombosis and angina. And after your operation you're more likely to experience a chest infection, breathing difficulties, wound infections and poor healing.

Many overweight people are fit and healthy, but losing weight prior to hip or knee surgery will greatly improve the benefits of your joint replacement surgery and will mean there is less chance of your new joint failing. If you reduce your BMI, not only is there less pressure on your joints, it also lowers your risk of developing complications during surgery. Losing weight may mean you feel better and won't need to undergo surgery at all. The best way to lose weight is to eat a healthy, reduced calorie diet and exercise regularly.



**IMPROVING
YOUR
HEALTH
BEFORE
ROUTINE
SURGERY**

Important information for smokers
and patients who are overweight

What has changed?

NHS North Yorkshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has been reviewing its commissioning policies to ensure a joint approach across North Yorkshire and equality of access to services for patients. Commissioning policies set out the treatments, medicines and health services that are funded by CCGs. In the UK, local variations exist because they reflect the different needs of local communities and clinical priorities which vary in different parts of the country. Prior to the existence of NHS North Yorkshire CCG, each of the three disestablished CCGs in North Yorkshire worked to a slightly different set of commissioning policies, which included health optimisation.

What does the new health optimisation policy say?

If you are a smoker, or your BMI is above a certain threshold and you need an operation, your GP may ask you to make changes to your lifestyle to ensure you are fit for surgery, including stopping smoking and losing weight. You will be asked to make changes before your referral is made.

What support will you get from a clinician?

To help with your health optimisation your clinician has an obligation to:

- Ensure you have patient information leaflet(s) and signposts the most appropriate support required for your lifestyle changes.
- Ensure you are advised of your options including non-surgical options and the risks/benefits associated with them.
- Ensure that arrangements are made for any necessary review while patients are on the pathway for surgery.
- Advise you to seek review by your GP or other appropriate health professional should your condition change during the period for lifestyle changes.



Support on how to quit smoking

You are more likely to successfully quit smoking with help. Call Living Well Smokefree on 01609 797272 or for further information on how to self-refer visit www.northyorks.gov.uk/stopping-smoking

Support on how to lose weight

The weight loss service in North Yorkshire is provided by North Yorkshire County Council; information on how to self refer can be found by visiting www.northyorks.gov.uk/healthy-weight-and-eating-well

