Monochorionic Twins
Complications of Shared Placenta

Important information for patients and relatives

Children and Young People’s Home Care Team
Child and Adolescent Unit
Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Leighton Hospital
Middlewich Road
Crewe, Cheshire
CW1 4QJ
Direct Line: 01270 612071
Website: www.mcht.nhs.uk
E-mail: cyphct@mcht.nhs.uk

Alder Hey Children’s NHS Foundation Trust Hospital
Eaton Road
West Derby
Liverpool
L12 2AP
Direct Line: 0151 228 4811
www.alderhey.nhs.uk

Customer Care Team
Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Leighton Hospital
Middlewich Road
Crewe, Cheshire
CW1 4QJ
Direct Line: 01270 612410
E-mail: customercareteam@mcht.nhs.uk

This leaflet is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please telephone 01270 612071.
The Joshua Tree
Supporting families affected by childhood cancer

Offering support to the whole family, patients, parents and siblings with counselling, practical and therapeutic help to ensure that life remains as normal as possible during an incredibly traumatic time.

Also support for the child and family in achieving the best academic, social and emotional outcomes both in and out of school.

You can contact the Joshua Tree (see details below) or ask your health professional to refer you.

1 Old Hall
Venables Road
NORTHWICH
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CW9 5RF
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E-mail: office@thejoshuatree.org.uk

From one parent to another

We know that this is a traumatic time. We also know that having no information is worse than having some. So, with this in mind, we have put together some basic information which may help to allay some of your fears and uncertainty. We will support you at all times and if you need anything, just ask, also never refuse an offer of help.

Written by parents of children with cancer
Shared Care

The aim of ‘shared care’ is that once your child’s diagnosis has been confirmed at Alder Hey and treatment has started, care can be provided locally, in certain circumstances, if your child becomes unwell. This reduces the number of visits to Alder Hey. Your child’s treatment will be the same as that at Alder Hey. Staff from both hospitals will liaise over your child’s care.

Arrival at Alder Hey

On arrival at Alder Hey, you will have a bed but this may not be on the Oncology Unit until your child’s diagnosis has been fully confirmed. Therefore your child may be admitted to a general ward where all care will be directed by the Oncology Staff. You may stay with your child at all times.

To confirm your child’s diagnosis, different investigations will be needed in the first few days, some of which will be repeated. A brief explanation of the tests follows. However, your doctor will keep you fully informed at all times.

Blood Tests

Your child will require a number of blood tests to help diagnosis. This will probably be through a plastic tube, called a cannula, being placed into the back of the hand, arm or foot to obtain blood. It may be left in place for a number of days. Before the cannula is put in a ‘magic’ cream called ‘Emla / Ametop’ may be placed on your child’s skin to reduce discomfort.

What facilities are available?

There is a restaurant serving hot and cold food and drinks which is situated on the ground floor in the atrium. This is open at various times.

There is also a cash point situated in the atrium where (free) withdrawals can be made.

A shop is next to the restaurant which sells snacks, toys and magazines.

If you get transferred to the Oncology Unit there is also a parent’s room where you can cook, shower and wash clothes etc. If you are unsure about the facilities available, just ask a staff member and they will be happy to help.

What are the visiting times?

We have an open visiting policy for parents but for any other visitor it is 2.30pm - 7.30pm, 7 days a week including Bank Holidays.
What about public transport?

**Bus**

For information on local bus routes and timetables visit: [www.merseytravel.gov.uk](http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk)
Telephone Travel Line on: 0151 236 7676

**Trains**

The nearest main line station is Liverpool Lime Street Station. For information on local trains and timetable information visit: [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)
Telephone: 03457 48 49 50

**Airport**

John Lennon Liverpool Airport is the nearest local airport. Telephone: 0871 521 8484

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**Tests**

**X-Ray:** These are simple pictures taken of inside the body.

**CT scan:** The scanner is a special machine shaped like a polo which takes detailed pictures of inside the body, which are then sent directly to a computer. Your child will lie on the bed in the middle of the ‘polo’ and will move in and out of the hole.

**MRI scan:** This is similar to the CT scan but makes a loud humming noise and your child has to lie very still for a length of time. Usually you will be allowed to take your own music.

**Ultrasound:** Most mums will have had one of these! Cold jelly is placed on your child and a ‘lollipop shaped’ instrument is rolled over the body to give ‘inside’ pictures.

**ECG:** Electro Cardio Graph tests check your child’s heart rhythm and rate and are quick, pain free and can be seen on the screen whilst in progress.

**Consent:** A parent will be required to sign a consent form for any surgery / procedures. If you have any queries about what you are consenting to you should speak with the consultant carrying out the procedure.

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**What is the hospital telephone number?**

The number for the main switchboard at Alder Hey is: 0151 228 4811

Family will then need to ask for the ward that your child is on and the switchboard will then transfer the call to that ward.

**Will I be able to stay with my child overnight?**

One parent or guardian may sleep by your child’s bedside. For other members of your immediate family, accommodation within the hospital grounds may be used if available. Hospital staff will arrange this for you.
Questions you may be asking yourself

What will I need to bring with me?

We would advise you to bring at least an overnight bag for both yourself and your child, containing wash bag, change of clothes and pyjamas. Your child’s favourite toy (this can include electronic devises) would be a good idea and books or magazines for yourself.

Do I have to pay for parking?

Yes. Parking costs £2 per visit. You can also buy a ‘10 consecutive visits’ ticket, which cost £15.00 (£5.00 refundable when you bring the card back) from the Cash Office located in the atrium.

Payment is made at one of the car parking machines before returning to your car. A token is dispensed which is inserted at the barrier.

There are two car parking machines in the atrium and one on the lower ground floor before the exit.

There are parking spaces for Blue Badge which are clearly marked. Blue Badges must be clearly displayed in vehicles at all times.

Tests in theatre

Lumbar Puncture / Bone Marrow Aspirate

Your child may need to go to theatre for a procedure known as a lumbar puncture and bone marrow aspirate. Your child will usually be under general anaesthetic and asleep for this. The procedure involves taking a small amount of fluid from the base of the spine. This usually confirms diagnosis with the aid of some of the above tests.

Biopsy: If your child has a tumour they may have a biopsy which is done under general anaesthetic and involves the removal of a small part of the tumour for analysis. This will assist with the diagnosis.

Central Line: This is a device which is put in under general anaesthetic. It is a tube which exits from your child’s chest area and is tunnelled under the skin and goes into the main vein. Once in place it is to prevent your child from having any further injections and blood tests via a needle. It is also used to give your child any medications that need to be given via a vein. This will be explained to you before your child has it fitted.
**Oncology Unit – Alder Hey**

If your child’s diagnosis is confirmed, your child will be transferred to the Oncology Unit to start treatment.

The Oncology Unit is based on Ward 3B which is divided into the following areas:

- **Inpatient Area** (0-12 years) - yellow zone
- **Teenage Trust** (13-18 years) - green zone
- **Day Care Area** – orange zone  
  (all children needing treatment but not an overnight stay)
- **Outpatients Clinic**  
  (All children to be reviewed by Doctors)

The Oncology Unit treats all kind of cancers and the treatments vary enormously. On arrival at the Oncology Unit you may meet some children who have lost their hair. Some children may be in wheelchairs and / or attached to various tubes and machines. This can seem bewildering at first but the staff will explain anything your child may need and answer any questions.

On admission to the Oncology Unit your child will be given a ‘Family Held Records’. This folder belongs to your child but is for the whole family and it will explain everything you need to know, in a language that you can understand.

**Who will be involved with my child’s care?**

**Consultants:** The Consultants are based on the Oncology Unit. Depending on your child’s diagnosis, there may be more than one Consultant involved in their care.

**Nurses:** The Nurses will help you care for your child, explain all procedures, keep you informed and answer your questions. Nurses will also give any medication that is needed.

**Advanced Nurse Practitioners:** These nurses have specialised knowledge and experience and will co-ordinate your child’s admission.

**Macmillan Nurses and Children’s Community Nurses:** These nurses will support you at home and liaise between hospital and other services. Children’s Community Nurses provide support and carry out routine procedures at your home.

**Research Nurse:** Our Research Nurse will be able to explain all clinical trials and may ask you if you would like to take part in certain trials for future treatments.

**Dietician:** These people will offer advice about diet once treatment has started, if and when needed.

**Social Worker:** A Social Worker from the Children’s Cancer Charity Clic Sargent tries to meet all our families and offers advice and support about work and financial support. He / she also offer social support for the whole family.

**Play Specialist:** We have a team of play specialists who will work with your child through difficult times, such as getting ready for theatre, with the help of play.

**School Teacher:** We do have a school room on the Oncology Unit which is open during term time.