This leaflet is relevant to the following clinic:
- St Georges Park Hospital
  Morpeth
  Northumberland
  NE61 2NU
Who is this leaflet for?
This leaflet is for people who are attending a Clozapine Clinic. In it, we will try to answer some of the questions that you may have about Clozapine and attending the clinic. Your doctor will explain your individual treatment plan, how it could help you and will agree the plan with you. The benefits of Clozapine, how you will obtain repeat prescriptions, and side effects will be discussed with you. Any possible alternative treatments will also be discussed.

You should tell your prescribing doctor of any other medications you are currently taking.

What is a Clozapine Clinic?
It is a regular clinic for the monitoring of Clozapine therapy, which involves taking a blood sample and checking for side-effects and any physical health problems. This may include blood pressure, pulse, temperature check and possibly an ECG. The central base for the Clozapine service and other physical treatments in the Northumberland locality of the Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust is at the Treatment Centre, St Georges Park.

When is the clinic held?
The Clozapine Clinic is held every Thursday, by appointment, between 8am and 4pm.

Interpreters
Staff can arrange an interpreter if you need one.
Where are we?
The Treatment Centre is based on the ground floor of the east wing corridor, St Georges Park, Morpeth, Northumberland. You can contact us on 01670 501 759.

The answering machine will be on to take your call out of hours, or if staff are busy in clinics. If so, please leave your name, contact number and a short message and we will ring you back as soon as possible.

Our main office is located at:
Treatment Centre
St Georges Park
Morpeth
Northumberland
NE61 2NU

What is Clozapine?
Clozapine (brand name Clozaril currently used within Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust) is an antipsychotic drug used in the treatment of people with schizophrenia. It should only be used when at least two other drug treatments have not worked.

Clozapine interacts with receptors in the brain, which control the activity of chemical messages. These receptors are over active in people with schizophrenia and Clozapine decreases their activity.

Clozapine tablets do not have any special storage requirements.
Are there any side effects of Clozapine?
Some common side effects are feeling sleepy or drowsy, producing extra saliva (spit) and dribbling (alternatively, you may notice a dry mouth), loss of appetite and constipation. It is important to remember that everyone is different so may react differently to medication. The leaflet ‘What to expect from Clozaril…’ gives more information on side effects.

You should let clinic staff know of any side effects you are experiencing. You will be asked about side effects by the staff when you attend for bloods to be taken.

Why is Clozapine only used in a restricted group of people?
Clozapine is a proven, effective treatment, but it can occasionally reduce the number of white blood cells in your body, which are responsible for fighting infection. These are called neutrophils and a fall in the number of these cells can lead to a condition called neutropenia. The blood tests you will have while you are taking Clozapine are required to check the number of white blood cells in order to detect any changes early before they cause problems. You will not be allowed to receive Clozapine unless you have an up-to-date blood result.

If the cell levels are very low, you may be at risk of developing a very serious infection.

Please refer to the leaflet ‘What to Expect from Clozaril…” for further information regarding frequency of blood checks and monitoring information.

Why has Clozapine been prescribed for me?
Clozapine can help to reduce unpleasant symptoms such as hearing voices, having strange and frightening thoughts and experiencing worrying changes in your behaviour. It can help those people for whom other medication has not been fully effective.
What happens when I attend the Clozapine Clinic?
A blood sample is taken by one of our staff. This is usually processed by a blood analysis machine sited in the clinic. This result is forwarded electronically to the Clozapine Patient Monitoring Service (CPMS) and categorised using a traffic light system - Green - Amber - Red.

If the result is:
- **Green**, your medication, which is pre-dispensed by our pharmacy department, will usually be given to you by pharmacy.
- An **Amber** result means you may be given your medication but asked to return to the department for additional blood checks until a green result is obtained.
- A **Red** result means you would have to stop taking Clozapine immediately and again attend for additional blood tests until the result returns to green.

The clinic staff will advise you of any abnormal results.

You will need to inform the staff at any time if you have a high temperature as this may indicate an infection, which will require further investigation.

If, at any time, you find you have more than a week’s Clozapine medication in hand at the time of your blood test appointment, please return these to the pharmacy when your next prescription is collected.

Your visit to the clinic should take no more than 30 minutes. However, during busy periods you may have to wait a little longer than this.
What happens if I miss a blood test?
You will be given enough medication to last until your next appointment. If you miss your appointment it is likely that you are running out of medication. It is important to contact the Physical Treatment Centre as soon as possible to arrange another appointment. **Also, if you miss your medication for any reason for 48 hours or more, you must contact your nurse or doctor immediately, as you may not be able to continue at the same dose.** Further advice is given in the leaflet ‘What to Expect from Clozaril…’ Novartis Pharmaceuticals UK Ltd. Which is available at the Clozapine clinics or from your doctor and/or care coordinator.

What if I want more information?
If you have any questions about your medication, please talk to your doctor or nurse. If you explain what your query is, they will either be able to help you themselves, or, will let you know who can give you the information. Please feel free to phone the Treatment Centre at St Georges Park for information and advice – Tel: 01670 501 759

What if I have a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about the service?
If you want to make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint you can:
- talk to the people directly involved in your care
- complete a feedback card, available on wards. Some areas of the Trust have electronic feedback touch screens, staff can help you to use these. Your feedback allows us to monitor the quality of our services and act upon issues that you or your carers bring to our attention.
- ask a member of staff for a feedback form, or complete a form on the Trust website www.ntw.nhs.uk (click on the ‘Contact Us’ tab)
- telephone the Complaints Department Tel: 0191 245 6672
References

- ‘What to expect from Clozaril’, Novartis Pharmaceuticals UK Ltd.

Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this leaflet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre.

This information can be made available in a range of formats on request (eg Braille, audio, larger print, easy read, BSL or other languages). Please contact the Patient Information Centre Tel: 0191 223 2545

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