



If you come from overseas and want to have medical treatment in the United Kingdom you will need to identify a suitable doctor and hospital for your complaint. This can be difficult if you do not have a general practitioner (family doctor) to advise you. General practitioners are not specialists but can treat most routine conditions and will send you on to see a specialist if necessary. In fact there are many excellent fully private general practitioners in the central London area. In addition many NHS general practitioners will see you as a paying private patient. If you are resident in London then you should consider registering yourself (and family) with a general practitioner; the regulations governing this are available from most general practitioner surgeries. Many private hospitals in London have general practitioners working in them and a list can be obtained of these doctors.

Some overseas patients may also obtain direct consultant assistance by looking through directories for a suitable person, such as the list on this website. Alternatively you may contact a suitable hospital that will give you the name of a consultant.

If you are coming from abroad or indeed anywhere in the UK, you should bring with all your medical history including x-rays and scans. These should be in English if possible.

The cost of private medical treatment in the UK is quite high. Your consultant's fees should be made clear to you in advance and if the situation is a straightforward one such as a specific operation then there should not be a problem. However, if you are being admitted for investigation or have a serious illness it may be difficult to predict all costs. Generally speaking, unless you have substantial financial reserves, you should not embark on extensive investigation or treatment for complex diseases where there are risks of prolonged stay and therefore high charges.

Hospital charges usually exceed the consultant's fees if you need in-patient care. However, if you need in patient care the private hospitals may be able to give you a "package price" which covers all the charges. You should note that hospitals charge for dressings, drugs and operating theatre use. Also, for a recovery period in an Intensive Care Unit or a High Dependency Unit, which could become very expensive. There may be other charges for x-rays and pathology tests.

You should try and clarify what is covered in a package price and also what will happen if your stay needs to be extended because of some complication.