



Tallaght
University
Hospital

Ospidéal
Ollscoile
Thamhlachta

An Academic Partner of Trinity College Dublin



THE NATIONAL ATAXIA CLINIC

PATIENT
INFORMATION
BOOKLET

What is Ataxia?

Ataxia is a term used to describe problems with balance and co-ordination. There are many causes of ataxia and this condition affects people in different ways.

The National Ataxia Clinic at Tallaght University Hospital

The National Ataxia Clinic in Tallaght University Hospital is the only designated centre of expertise for the diagnosis and management of ataxia in the Republic of Ireland. It provides a highly specialised service for patients with suspected or confirmed inherited (genetic) or acquired causes of ataxia. As many forms of ataxia are very rare it is vital that accurate diagnosis is facilitated by specialists with expertise in the diagnosis and management of rare forms of ataxia.

This is a monthly multidisciplinary clinic, co-directed by Consultant Neurologists Dr Sinéad Murphy and Dr Richard Walsh. The Ataxia Clinic team also includes the ataxia research registrar, Dr Petya Bogdanova-Mihaylova and the nurse specialist Sharon Moran.

In our Combined Ataxia Clinic which runs four times a year. At this appointment Dr Deirdre Ward, a Cardiologist with a special interest in inherited cardiac disorders will assess patients such as those with Friedreich's Ataxia. A cardiac echo can be arranged on the same day thus saving patients' additional hospital visits.

In the clinic patients with ataxia benefit from care by a specialist team who are knowledgeable about the various rare forms of ataxia. The clinic provides ongoing monitoring and management and offers advice and practical support. In order to ensure continuity of care within the community services a referral to allied health professionals such as physiotherapists and occupational therapists can also be arranged.

What to bring on the day of your appointment?

Bring someone with you if possible.

- It can be helpful to bring a family member or friend with you. The day of your appointment can be a long day so it helps to have someone to chat to as you wait to see the doctor.

Bring a list.

- A full list of your medications including the amounts that you take. Please remember to include any vitamins and supplements you are taking.
- Please also bring any letters or test results you may have.
- Also bring a list of questions you may have for the doctor.

Who will I see in clinic?

- You will see a doctor with expertise in ataxia.
- You may have a blood test, x-ray or an eye test.
- The clinic nurse will also assess your needs and current therapy service in the community.

Involvement in Research

The team at the National Ataxia Clinic at Tallaght University Hospital is also involved in various research projects.

Patients who are interested may therefore have the opportunity to take part in research studies.

Car Parking / Refreshments

There is car parking on the hospital site with limited access to disability spaces. There is a coffee shop on site and a hospital dining room also.

Follow-up

A letter for your next appointment will be sent to you six weeks prior to your follow-up appointment.

Contact the team

If you need to contact a member of the Ataxia Clinic Team please contact the department secretary on 01 414 4061

Other helpful contacts

<http://www.orpha.net/national/IE-EN/index/homepage/>

