

REFERRAL GUIDELINES: NEUROSURGERY

When to Refer

URGENT

Step 1 Contact the neurosurgery registrar via St Vincent's switch board on **03 9231 2211**

URGENT CONDITIONS

BRAIN	SPINE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brain Tumours causing symptoms of raised intracranial pressure, epilepsy Intracranial bleeds including; subarachnoid haemorrhage, subdural haemorrhage, extradural haemorrhage, intracranial haemorrhage Brain Abscess Hydrocephalus causing symptoms of raised intracranial pressure, (headaches, nausea and vomiting) Blocked V-P Shunt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cord Compression with Neurological symptoms Cauda equina syndrome as defined by Back pain with neurological and bladder involvement Known history of Malignancy particularly with Metastasis

SEMI-URGENT

Step 1 All semi-urgent referrals are to be referred to St. Vincent's Hospital, Neurosurgery Outpatient's clinic.

Step 2 Neurosurgery Outpatient Fax: 9231 3489 Neurosurgery Outpatient Phone: 9231 3475

Step 3 All referrals will be triaged according to clinical urgency.

Step 4 Referrals must include the following Demographic and Clinical details;

- date of birth
- contact details (including mobile phone)
- referring GP details
- Interpreter requirements
- Medicare number
- reason for referral
- duration of symptoms
- relevant pathology and imaging reports
- past medical history
- current medications

Step 5 Imaging must be included with the referral.

Please note that General Practitioners are able to order rebatable MRI's for patients over the age of 16 years for the following;

- MRI cervical spine for radiculopathy or trauma
- MRI head for unexplained seizures or chronic headaches with suspected intracranial pathology.

SPINE	BRAIN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cervical disc prolapse or cord compression with scans and appropriate signs (arm pain +/- neurological deficit) Lumbar canal stenosis with scans and appropriate signs (leg pain +/- neurological deficit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trigeminal Neuralgia

ROUTINE	
<p>Step 1 All routine condition referrals are to be referred to St. Vincent’s Hospital, Neurosurgery Outpatient’s Clinic</p> <p>Step 2 Neurosurgery Outpatient Fax: 9231 3489 Neurosurgery Outpatient Phone: 9231 3475</p> <p>Step 3 All referrals will be triaged according to clinical urgency.</p> <p>Step 4 Referrals must include the following Demographic and Clinical details;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • date of birth • contact details (including mobile phone) • referring GP details • Interpreter requirements • Medicare number • reason for referral • duration of symptoms • relevant pathology and imaging reports • past medical history • current medications <p>Step 5 Imaging must be included with the referral. Please note that General Practitioners are able to order Medicare rebatable MRI’s for patients over the age of 16 years for the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRI cervical spine for radiculopathy or trauma • MRI head for unexplained seizures or chronic headaches with suspected intracranial pathology. 	
SPINE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cervical disc prolapse with no neurological deficit • Lumbar with no neurological deficit • Peripheral nerve loss <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carpal Tunnel Syndrome ○ Ulnar Neuropathy 	

Conditions not seen at St Vincent’s Hospital	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Patient’s already on another hospital’s waiting list 2. Headache with no pathology or imaging 3. Seizures without abnormality on imaging 4. Neck pain with no radicular signs or symptoms and imaging only showing degenerative changes 5. Back pain 	

Recommendations for GP in the Management of Patients who present with only Neck Pain or Back Pain	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider Bone Scan 2. If abnormal imaging, they may be suitable for facet joint injections 3. Structured rehabilitation program to be arranged by GP 4. Pain management program to be arranged by GP <p style="text-align: center;"><i>These are general recommendations and not specific to your patient.</i></p>	