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Hospital introduces gold standard test

South Tyneside patients are being given a new 'gold standard' test as part of their pre-operative assessment.

Cardiopulmonary Exercise Testing (CPEX) is being introduced this week at South Tyneside District Hospital for bowel cancer surgery patients and it is anticipated that, over the next six months, it will be offered to patients having other operations as well.

During the test, the patient exercises on a bike whilst wearing a mask and measurements are taken which provide information about the lungs, heart, muscles and peripheral circulation – the blood flow that reaches the upper and lower extremities of the body and the surface of the skin. Staff, including consultant anaesthetists and operating department practitioners, have been specially trained to take the measurements.

Consultant Anaesthetist Dr Naveen Venugopal said: "This is a very important development which is great news for South Tyneside as it is the gold standard test for comprehensive pre-operative assessment for patients undergoing major surgery.

"It was originally used in the training of elite athletes to see whether they were improving their fitness. In the hospital setting, it can help to determine a patient's fitness for surgery, as using the exercise bike mimics how the body will react post-surgery. It also provides information on the risks to the patient of having the operation and can identify other disorders or diseases, which may require the anaesthesia for the operation to be modified."

Consultant Anaesthetist Dr Darshan Boregowda added: "The test is useful in terms of planning patient care as it helps predict whether a patient would benefit from a post-operative stay in the high dependency unit or the intensive care unit."

ends

Pictured above: The photograph shows Consultant Anaesthetists Dr Naveen Venugopal (left) and Dr Darshan Boregowda, on the bike, with other hospital staff

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan

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