

Discharge Advice Leaflet

This leaflet can be made available
in alternative languages / formats on request.

如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona
w innych językach/formatach.

Whiston Hospital
Warrington Road,
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

St Helens Hospital
Marshall Cross Road,
St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 3DA
Telephone: 01744 26633

Having an operation can be a stressful experience both physically and emotionally.

Our aim is to get you back to full health as quickly as possible.

Research indicates that the earlier you get out of bed walking and eating/drinking after your operation the better.

Discharge home from hospital could be 4 or 5 days after your operation. It is therefore important to plan and prepare for your discharge home before coming into hospital.

You will be part of a team who work together to get you better and prevent any complications and get you home as soon as possible.

Discharge home from hospital will be from 10am wherever possible.

If you are unable to get family or friends to collect you at this time, then the nursing staff will arrange for you to go to the hospital's Discharge Lounge.

There are staff in the Discharge Lounge and you will be offered hot meals and drinks for the time that you are there. Here your family can park in the Ambulance bay to pick you up, without paying the parking fee.

Notes

Issues to consider before your hospital admission

The team advise you to arrange help from family, friends or neighbour's to help you recover at home at least in the first couple of weeks of returning home. This help needs organising before coming into hospital.

Knowing in advance allows your carers to arrange time off work for when you leave hospital.

Household chores e.g. using a vacuum, shopping, preparing a meal, gardening and cleaning involve a lot of bending and stretching which you may find uncomfortable.

When you first return home you are likely to feel tired for a while. Feedback from previous patients state that it took them 3-6 months to feel completely back to their normal selves.

We recommend that you build up your strength before coming into hospital with daily walks, gentle exercise and a good dietary intake, eat little and often.

It is also important for patients who smoke to get help to stop.

We do appreciate that this is a stressful time for you, but by doing this you will prevent the risk of chest infections and it will help to heal the join in your bowel which is made during your operation.

A further important health issue is to reduce your alcohol intake at least 3 weeks before your planned operation, and continue the good work for about 6-8 weeks after you go home. By doing this you will reduce the chances of the join in your bowel leaking.

We would advise no heavy lifting for 4-6 weeks following your operation. If you have small children or grandchildren, try to let them climb onto your lap while you are sitting rather than lifting them up.

Other issues to consider and ask for help with

- Transport from hospital to home at 10am on your discharge day. Appropriate clothing for going home, especially in the winter
- Arrangements for childcare: school run/activities.
- Caring for pets, walking the dog.
- Arrangements for paying bills.
- Ensure you have a front door key with you or someone to meet you.
- Suitable home environment e.g. access to a telephone and toilet facilities.
- Consider furniture e.g. a chair which is high enough to rise from easily without putting strain on your stomach muscles. Arrange cupboards so items are easy to reach.

If necessary a stair assessment may be arranged by the Physiotherapist before you leave hospital to ensure your safety. If you are unable to arrange help for your return home please ensure you contact your Enhanced Recovery Nurse before coming into hospital.

Rest and sleep

You will probably be surprised at how tired you feel when you go home... **this is normal**. When you have returned home you should continue to wear the surgical stockings given to you for 2 weeks after going home to prevent the risk of blood clots. This is very important.

Try to plan a rest time each day and let your family and friends know that it is an important part of your recovery and that they should try not to disturb you if possible. You may find sleeping at night difficult at first this is because your normal routine has been disturbed.

Ward contacts

The staff on Ward 4C would like to wish you a safe recovery at home.

If you have a problem or concern or any questions that have not been answered in this leaflet, please contact us on **0151 430 1441**.

However, if you have a problem that requires a physical assessment then we will advise you whether you should come back to hospital or whether you should make an appointment to see your GP.

Sexuality

There is no set time for resuming sexual relationships, you yourself will know when you are ready. However if you are taking an oral contraception discuss with your GP because its absorption may be affected.

Other forms of contraception can be recommended by your GP.

A more detailed discharge advice booklet will be given and discussed with you when you are ready to leave hospital.

If you have any concerns or worries from reading this information please do not hesitate to contact one of the staff on Ward 4C before coming into hospital on 0151 430 1441.

Work

If you work we would advise that you discuss with your boss the need for time off work after your operation and support on your return to work before coming into hospital. If available, talk with your Occupational Health Department.

The length of time off will depend on the type of job you do.

People with jobs that require a lot of heavy manual work may require more time off than those with less physically active jobs.

If your job involves a lot of heavy lifting, you should not go back to work until you have returned to hospital for your post-operative check up at 4-6 weeks.

Driving

Contact your insurance company prior to your hospital admission to inform them that you require an operation as your insurance policy may be affected.

We advise that you should not start driving again until your strength and speed of movement are up to coping with an emergency stop. If you are a driver ask family and friends to help with driving you.

Travel

Please check with your Consultant/GP before flying especially long haul flights.

Long car journeys are best avoided at least for 6-8 weeks following your operation.

If unavoidable then we would recommend taking regular stops throughout your journey to stretch your legs.

When you are at home

Abdominal Pain

It is not unusual to suffer gripping pains (colic) during the first week following the removal of a portion of your bowel. The pain normally lasts for a few minutes and will go away completely in between episodes.

Severe pain that lasts for several hours may indicate a leakage of fluid from the area where the bowel has been joined together. This is a rare complication but can be very serious. Should this occur it may also be accompanied by a fever. Occasionally, a leakage may occur which makes you feel generally unwell and causes a fever but is without pain.

***If you have severe pain lasting more than 1-2 hours or have a fever and feel generally unwell you should seek medical advice immediately or telephone ward 4c 01514301441 to speak to the nurse in charge for advice.**

Wound

It is not unusual for your wounds to be slightly red and uncomfortable during the first 1-2 weeks after surgery. However, please do not hesitate to contact your District Nurse, Practice Nurse or GP Practice if you experience any of the following:

- Increased pain around wound site
- Fresh discharge or swelling
- Feels warm to touch

If you have staples or sutures they will be removed by a District/ Practice Nurse usually 7-10 days after surgery.

Exercise

We encourage activity from day one following surgery. Aim to gradually increase your level of physical activity once home. This exercise will help strengthen your stomach muscles. Gentle exercise and fresh air will help recovery.

It is important that you continue to wear your surgical stockings for at least 2 weeks after returning home while your strength and daily exercise improve. This helps to prevent the risk of a blood clot.

Diet

A balanced and varied diet is recommended and you should try to eat at least 3 or more times a day. If you have a stoma, the stoma care nurses will give you specialist advice on your diet unless directed otherwise by your Consultant or Dietician.

It is important that you obtain an adequate amount of protein and calories to help your body heal. Once your appetite has increased you will be able to follow your normal diet. A Dietician information leaflet will be provided. Please contact your GP for advice if you have any of the following symptoms:

- A swollen or hard stomach
- An increase in stomach pain which is not eased by painkillers
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Do not pass wind in 24hrs
- Pass large amounts of blood in your motions
- Symptoms of a fever (feeling hot and cold, uncontrolled shaking/tremors)
- Sudden onset of breathlessness.