

If you are expecting an outpatient appointment but do not receive one, please contact the Dissection Nurse Specialist first. If unable to contact her, please contact your Consultant's secretary.

### Useful contact numbers

Dissection Nurse Specialist	07879 016569
Ward 3A	0151 430 1520
Dressing Clinic	0151 430 1285
Hospital Switchboard	0151 426 1600

### Your next appointment is:

Date .....

Time .....

Location .....

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

## Dissection Service

### Going home with drain(s) in place

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.

## Discharge

As the Regional Plastic Surgery Unit, our aim is to deliver the best possible care whilst minimising your stay in hospital. We feel that care is all about involving our patients in their care and treatment, having choices and being able to make decisions about what happens to them.

You have chosen to access the Dissection Outreach Service and we hope this will help you recover quickly whilst being in your own home, and reduce any stress you may be feeling.

## Care of your drains

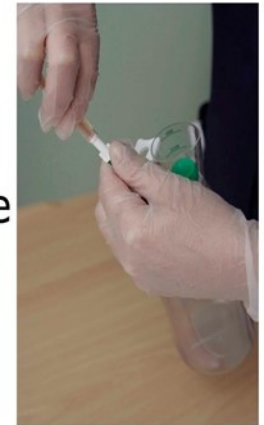
- With your consent, your consultant and the Dissection Nurse Specialist have agreed that you are able to go home with your drain(s) still in place if you wish to. There is a specific condition to access this service which requires honesty from you.
- The Dissection Nurse Specialist will visit you once. This is usually 24 hours after discharge. A convenient time will be agreed with you.
- The Dissection Nurse will discuss Telehealth Video Consultations with you and if you are eligible further information will be given to you.
- When you go home you will need to measure the fluid in your drain(s) every 24 hours.
- You will be shown how to measure your drain(s) before discharge by the Dissection Nurse Specialist.
- The Dissection Nurse Specialist will phone you daily to make sure you have no concerns or worries and get your drain measurement.
- You will be given a bag to take home to carry your drain(s) in.
- If you have a drain under your arm be careful not to catch the tubing on door handles when at home.
- If your drain is in your thigh, the Dissection Nurse Specialist advises women to wear skirts and men to wear shorts, (weather permitting) or loose fitting trousers.

## How to change a drain bottle

Please ensure hands are washed thoroughly

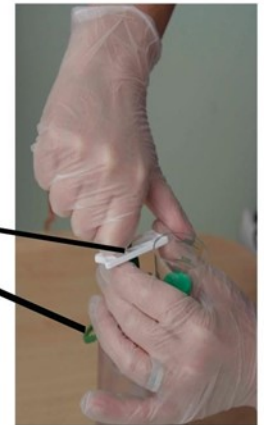
C

Replace with new bottle



D

Open clamps X2



## How to change a drain bottle

Please ensure hands are washed thoroughly

**A**

Close clamps X2



**B**

Unscrew and remove bottle



## Care of your drains

- When your drain(s) are to be removed, please take pain killers **30 minutes** before your visit.
- Once your drain(s) are removed it will be necessary to place a small drainage bag over the area where your drain(s) have been. This can be in place for between **1-3 days**. The Dissection Nurse Specialist will show you how to empty this.
- When your drain(s) have been removed you will be seen by the physiotherapist who will assess the movement in your affected limb and give you further instructions on your exercises.

## Medication

- When you go home you may be given pain medication to take.
- Medication will be discussed with you by a nurse and she/he will go through these with you: when to take them and if there are any side effects you need to watch for.
- You may also be prescribed antibiotics. If you are it is important that you finish the whole prescribed course as they will not work otherwise.
- If you are unsure of when and how to take your medications, please speak to the nurse on the ward or the Dissection Nurse Specialist who will be happy to advise you and give any information you need.

## Dressings

- When you go home it is likely that you will still have a dressing on your wound(s). Please keep this clean, dry and undisturbed until your appointment with the Dissection Nurse Specialist.
- Your Dissection Nurse will change your dressings weekly either at your house or back at the hospital.

## Driving

- You cannot drive whilst your drain(s) are in place for your own safety and insurance purposes.
- It is advisable that you do not drive for 3-4 weeks and that you check with your insurance company before driving again.

## Household tasks

- Please avoid any lifting, pulling and pushing of the affected limb.
- Activities such as vacuuming, pushing shopping trolleys or hanging washing should be introduced gradually after a 2 week period if you have had surgery to your underarm (Axilla).

## Measuring your drain

- You should measure your drain once a day in the morning and write it on your drain chart.
- You should also measure your drain if you have to change your drain bottle at any point and write the measurement on your drain chart.

## When to change your dressings

You should change your drain bottles for 3 reasons:

1. If your drain is full - approx. 450mls in the bottle.
2. If the vacuum has gone on the drain and the green stopper is pushed up.
3. If you have a blockage in the non return valve and the drain is not draining.

## Problems

Please contact the Dissection Nurse Specialist on the number on the back of this leaflet if you have any of the following;

- Your drain becomes full and you are not able, or do not feel confident to change it
- You have increased swelling around the wound
- You have any redness which feels hot to touch and goes past the end of your dressing
- You have pain that is not relieved by taking your pain killers
- Your dressing comes off or there is any fluid from your wound on the dressing.

## Seroma

- A seroma is a collection of fluid that develops in the body after your drain has been removed. In some cases, if the swelling becomes troublesome it may be necessary to visit the ward where a needle can be inserted and the fluid drained off.
- If fluid collects in the area where you have had surgery, please contact the Dissection Nurse Specialist who will advise you what the best treatment will be.
- If you are unsure of anything regarding your care or anything in this leaflet, please speak with the Dissection Nurse Specialist who will make sure your worries or concerns are dealt with. This may be done by contacting other healthcare professionals, i.e. consultant, skin clinical nurse specialist or physiotherapist.

## Appointment

Your outpatient appointment will be approximately 4 weeks after your surgery. You should receive it by post. (Please refer to back of leaflet for more information).