

PATIENT INFORMATION

Physiotherapy following your amputation

This leaflet explains what will happen after your amputation.

After the Operation

Initially you will be shown exercises in the bed and encouraged to sit out in your chair. Your exercises will be progressed as you improve and get stronger. We encourage you to be as independent as possible. If appropriate the physiotherapist will start you walking with the help of a temporary artificial limb called a PPAM aid. If not, you will be taught how to use a wheelchair. Even if you are to be fitted with an artificial limb you will be provided with a wheelchair by the occupational therapist so you can move around while you are waiting for your limb.

It is important that you feel comfortable in order to complete your rehabilitation program. If your medication is not controlling your pain, please tell your nurse.

Sometimes people feel as though their limb is still there. This is called Phantom Limb Sensation. Some people may feel pain in the limb that has been amputated. This is called Phantom Limb Pain. Handling the stump will help to reduce these feelings.

An appointment will be made for you to attend Exeter Mobility Centre (EMC) where the prosthetist will see you and decide when you are ready for limb fitting.

Not everyone will be able to manage to walk with an artificial limb. The rehabilitation team will help you to decide whether you will be suitable. To walk with an artificial leg requires much more energy than normal and is hard work. Sometimes it may be better to find other ways to move around safely. It is better not to hop as this may compromise the blood supply to the remaining leg.

The level of mobility you will achieve depends on the level of your amputation, your previous level of mobility and any other problems you may have.

Skin Care

It is important to look after the skin both on your stump and on your remaining foot. You need to check the condition of your skin every day and report any soreness or broken skin immediately to your GP or Podiatrist. You may find a small mirror helpful to see underneath your stump or foot. If you have diabetes or poor circulation it is especially important to look after your remaining foot as both of these conditions can slow down wound healing.

Any patient who has lost a limb is eligible for NHS podiatry. You can be referred by any health professional or you can ask for an application form in your GP practice.

Going Home

At first you may not be able to move around as well as normal. The rehabilitation team will assess your needs before you are discharged from hospital. You may need some extra help at home in the form of equipment, adaptations or support with domestic or personal help.

Having an amputation will increase your risk of falling. Your Physiotherapist or OT can advise you on reducing this risk and discuss ways of coping if you should fall. Outpatient physiotherapy will continue as needed.

Several visits to the Exeter Mobility Centre will be necessary to make adjustments to the limb as the stump gradually settles into shape and swelling subsides. You will be provided with a special sock which fits closely around your stump, and which reduces any swelling and improves the shape of your stump.

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust and Exeter Mobility Centre rehabilitation services often share the rehabilitation programme. You may be given a communication sheet to take to all therapy and prosthetic appointments for professionals to note points of progress or problems.

Useful Contacts

Specialist Physiotherapist

Exeter Mobility Centre

01392 403649

TSDFT Customer Services

Patient Transport

01803 656777

For Office Use:

Initially Assessed by:

Profession:

Location:

Contact Telephone No:

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.