

PATIENT INFORMATION

Leaving Hospital

Please read this leaflet before you leave hospital

You will probably be glad to be leaving hospital and getting back to your familiar surroundings, but do remember that it might take some time before you are back to your usual level of health and activity. You might feel a bit anxious about not having nurses and doctors as near to hand as when you were in hospital. This is a quite normal reaction. Please remember that there are people who you can contact if you are concerned about your recovery.

Your medication

You will probably be given medication to take home with you. It is important that you understand what this is for, how you should take it and how you might react to it. A nurse will normally explain these things to you and the medication may include an information leaflet. If you are unsure about any aspect of your medication, please ask a member of staff to explain it to you. You also need to be aware that some medication can cause side effects.

These can be complicated or fairly straight-forward. If you are worried that you are having an unexpected side effect, please follow any instructions that you may have been given, or contact your GP, pharmacist or local dispensing chemist. It is much better to ask for advice than worry unduly or be in unnecessary pain or discomfort.

If you are suffering a lot of pain this can slow down your recovery. If you have been prescribed pain relief it is important that you take these regularly to keep you comfortable.

Danger signals

If you have had an operation or procedure there is a small risk that you may develop complications. This will have been discussed with you before you signed your consent form and you will probably have been given written information about your operation or procedure, and any possible risks.

If you have symptoms such as a raised temperature, a wound site that is particularly red or sore or oozing or if you have concerns that you are feeling more unwell than you expected, this may mean that you have developed a complication and you need to seek prompt medical advice.

Seeking further help or advice

Regardless of whether you have had an operation or procedure, or you were admitted because of a medical condition or illness, if you become concerned you should seek further help or advice. The ward may have given you a contact number to call if you are worried about any aspect of your recovery, but if you cannot contact them or if they are unable to help you should call your GP or the out of hours GP service.

Getting back to your normal activities

It is important that you, and those close to you, remember that it takes time to get over a hospital stay, however short or routine it has been. If you have had an operation you should remember that even when your outside scar is healing quickly, you can take longer to heal inside.

Be sensible and follow the advice from hospital staff about what you should and shouldn't do. You will probably want to get back to your normal day-to-day activities as quickly as possible and your recovery will probably be faster if you get up and about quite soon. But you do need to make sure that you don't resume things like exercise and sport, lifting, housework, travelling, having sex and going back to work until you are well enough to do so.

Again, if you are unsure, please talk to staff about this before you leave hospital.

Driving

The general advice is to avoid driving until you are fit enough to do so safely. This is particularly important if you have had an operation. Follow the advice you have been given and always check with your insurance company before you resume driving as you may not be covered.

Telling us about your experience

We are always interested to know what patients think about the service they have received. If you have any feedback about what has gone well, or what could have been better, please talk to the senior ward staff. We would be pleased if you would complete the Patient Experience Questionnaire for Inpatients, which is also included in this pack.

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