

Going home from hospital (Poole Hospital)

Surgical Directorate Patient information

This leaflet is designed to explain what to expect when you go home after day surgery. You should also have been given information on medicines for pain relief.

Going home

When you go home you must have someone to stay with you overnight. You are advised to rest and sleep off the effects of your anaesthetic.

You will only have been in hospital for one day. You may feel slightly unwell for a day or two. Please take care, rest often, and follow the advice from your nurse.

For 24 hours after your anaesthetic, please do not:

- Drive.
- Drink alcohol or use recreational drugs.
- Operate machinery or use potentially dangerous equipment such as cooker or kettle.
- Make any significant decisions.
- Lift or carry heavy items, including children

This advice is because you have anaesthetic in your system. The type of surgery you had may stop you carrying out these activities for a longer period. Please ask your nurse for more information.

It is illegal to drive while you are under the influence of drugs. This includes anaesthetics and some painkillers. Your car insurance cover will be affected if you drive when we have advised you not to. You should only resume normal activities when you feel able to do so.

Flying

Please check with your surgeon if you are planning on flying. You may not be able to for a few weeks. This is due to a greater risk of complications, for example Deep Vein Thrombosis (blood clot), after surgery.

Dizziness and drowsiness

These side effects are very common after a general anaesthetic. They can go on for up to 48 hours. Rest is important. You are likely to sleep more than usual.

Nausea (feeling sick) and vomiting

Your nurse will have made sure any nausea and vomiting was controlled before you were sent home. The journey home can sometimes upset people especially after a general anaesthetic. Make sure you drink small amounts of clear fluids often if you feel sick or vomit. Please contact us for advice if this continues or worries you.

Bleeding

The site of the wound will take a few days to heal completely. It is important that you keep it clean and dry. A small amount of blood may be visible under the bandage. This is nothing to worry about. Some wounds are more likely to bleed than others; you will have been told what is normal. If there is bleeding which worries you, apply pressure over the bandage using a clean cloth and contact us for advice. You may not have a bandage after certain types of surgery. You may still have some bleeding. Your nurse will explain what is to be expected but please contact us if you are concerned. It is normal to have some bruising around the area, particularly if you are on blood thinners.

Pain

It is possible that you will have some discomfort after surgery. The nurses will give you an advice sheet of what pain relief to take and when. Please contact us or your general practitioner (GP) if you feel the pain is not manageable at home.

GP letter

You have been given a copy of your discharge summary. A copy is electronically sent to your GP surgery. If for any reason you need to seek medical attention, show them the copy of your discharge summary.

Who do I contact for help?

Day of Surgery provide telephone advice following surgery for the first **24 hours after your discharge**. After this you should contact your GP or **111** for advice. In the event of an emergency please call **999** or attend your nearest emergency department. After this you should be cared for by your GP.

Contact numbers

In hours

7am - 7.30pm Monday to Friday please call **Day of Surgery** on **0300 019 2150 / 0300 019 8095**.

Out of hours

7.30pm - 7am Monday to Friday and **24 hours** on **Saturday** and **Sunday** call the specialty ticked below:

(Please tick relevant out of hours specialty)

☐ **General surgery** - Call Surgical Assessment Unit (SAU) nurse in charge on **07884 816101** or **0300 019 3362 / 3492**.

☐ **Head and neck** - Call ward C4E nurse in charge on **07884 786989**.

☐ **Orthopaedics / Trauma** - Call TOACU on **0300 019 3660**.
TOACU is open Monday to Saturday 8am - 8pm. Outside of these hours please call main switch on **01202 665511** who will connect you to the trauma board holder.

Please be aware that the out of hours numbers above can get very busy at night so there may be a delay in answering the phone.

Discharge appointment/follow-up

- ☐ Your surgeon has requested that you have a follow up appointment. This will be with a doctor or nurse at the outpatient department at Poole Hospital in weeks time. Your appointment date and time will be posted to your home address.
- ☐ You will have a telephone follow-up with a registered nurse or surgeon to discuss your progress in weeks time.
- ☐ You will need to make an appointment with the practice nurse at your GP surgery for a wound check/ removal of stitches on Please make this appointment as soon as possible.
- ☐ There is no outpatient follow-up required.

Preventing blood clots

Blood clots can occur in the deep veins of the leg. This is called a deep vein thrombosis (DVT) which may cause pain, swelling and the leg to become hot and red, but there may be no obvious symptoms. Having surgery can increase your risk of DVTs.

Sometimes part of the blood clot can dislodge and go to the lungs. This called a pulmonary embolism (PE), this can cause difficulty in breathing, unexplained pain in the chest and coughing up blood. Please seek medical advice right away if you are worried you may have any of these symptoms.

Important note

The risk of developing blood clots can last for some weeks after discharge.

There are certain signs to look out for that could mean that you have a blood clot. You should contact your doctor immediately if you develop any of the following symptoms while you are in hospital.

- leg pain
- leg swelling
- warm or discoloured skin on the legs
- enlarged or more noticeable veins near the surface of the skin on your legs
- new-onset shortness of breath
- unexplained chest pain
- coughing up blood

The most important factors in helping to reduce blood clots is keeping well hydrated and mobile. It is very important you walk or exercise your legs whenever possible. You should do this even if you are in bed or a chair. Take regular deep breaths.

Further information

NHS non-emergency number: **111**. Please contact your GP as soon as possible if you think you have a blood clot. **Or in the event of emergency telephone 999.**

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please visit our website: www.uhd.nhs.uk/visit/patient-information-leaflets
and use the language and accessibility function available along the top of the site.

To ask for this leaflet in larger print, please contact the patient experience team on **0300 019 8499**
or email uhd.patientexperience@nhs.net.

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