

Patient information

Enhanced Recovery Programme DISCHARGE INFORMATION

When you leave hospital

Complications do not happen very often but it is important that you know what to look out for. During the first two weeks after surgery, if you are worried about any of the following, please phone the telephone numbers on this leaflet. If you cannot contact the people listed, then ring your GP.

Your wound

It is not unusual for your wound to be slightly red and uncomfortable during the first 1-2 weeks. Please let us know if your wound is:

- Becoming inflamed, painful or swollen
- Starting to discharge fluid

Your bowels

Your bowel habit may change after part of your bowel is removed. Your motions may become looser or you may become constipated. Make sure you eat regular meals three or more times a day and take regular walks during the first two weeks after your operation.

If you are passing loose stools more than three times a day for more than four days, please contact the Colorectal Nurse on the enclosed numbers.

If you are constipated for more than 3-4 days, taking a laxative is advised.

Passing urine

Sometimes after bowel surgery, you may experience a feeling that your bladder is not emptying fully. This usually resolves with time. If it does not, or if you have

excessive stinging when passing urine, please ring us as you may have an infection.

Diet

A healthy, varied diet is recommended. Make sure you eat regular meals three or more times a day. You may find some foods cause looseness of your bowels. If this is the case, you should avoid these foods for the first few weeks following your surgery. If you are finding it difficult to eat, it is very important to obtain an adequate intake of protein and calories. If you have diarrhoea, it is important to replace the fluid loss and to drink extra liquid.

Exercise

Activity is encouraged from day one following your surgery. You should take regular exercise several times a day. Gradually increase your exercise during the four weeks following your operation until you are back to your normal level of activity. Do not undertake heavy lifting until six weeks following your surgery. If you are planning to jog or swim, wait until two weeks after your surgery and then start gradually. Common sense will guide your exercise and rehabilitation. If your wound is uncomfortable, go easy with your exercise. Once your wound is pain free, you can undertake most activities.

Work

Many people are able to return to work within 2-4 weeks following their surgery. If your work involves heavy, manual labour, do not return to work until six weeks following your surgery.

Driving

Do not drive until you are confident that you can drive safely to perform an emergency stop without hesitation and it is comfortable to wear a seatbelt. It is best to check with your insurance company before you start driving again.

Hobbies / activities

In general, you can take up your hobbies and activities as soon as possible after your surgery. This will benefit your rehabilitation. However, do not do anything that causes significant pain or involves heavy lifting for the six weeks following your surgery.

Abdominal pain

You will most likely suffer gripping pains during the first week following removal of a

portion of the bowel. This pain usually lasts for up to a few minutes and will go away completely in between spasms.

Severe pain that lasts for several hours may indicate leakage of fluid from the area where the bowel has been joined together. This can be a serious complication which, fortunately, happens only rarely. Should this occur, it may be accompanied by a fever.

On occasion though, leakage may occur which makes you feel generally unwell, causing fever, but is without any pain.

If you have severe pain lasting more than 1-2 hours, or have a fever and feel generally unwell, you should contact us on the telephone numbers provided.

Colorectal Specialist Nurse

Monday – Friday, 9.00 am – 5.00 pm

Telephone: 01284 712697

Nurse in charge of Ward

Monday – Friday, 5.00 pm – 9.00 am or during weekends

Telephone: 01284 713262

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo) <https://www.accessable.co.uk>



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