

Patient information

Going home from Rainbow Ward

Your stay in hospital

You may have felt scared or stressed when coming to hospital. The hospital surroundings have many different noises, smells, lighting and routines.



During your time in hospital you may have experienced some or all of these thoughts:



It is normal to think and feel like this. It is also ok if you did not feel like this. This leaflet can help give you ideas of how to manage following a stressful hospital experience. It can also help you get back to normal life.

Your feelings



- Did you know? Scientists have estimated that we experience up to 70,000 thoughts every day.
- Our thoughts, feelings and behaviour are all linked and influence each other. This means if we are feeling relaxed, we may have positive or calming thoughts and this will affect how we act. However if we are feeling stressed we may experience more negative thoughts and may withdraw from friends, our families or activities.
- Did you know? Stress affects 1 in 4 of us every year. It can also have a big impact on our physical health and can make our bodies more tired, more sensitive to pain and we might find it hard to concentrate.

Back to routine

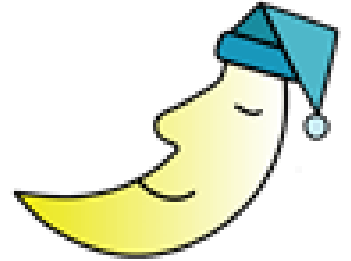
You may have missed some school or college work and you may feel under pressure to catch up. Ideas that may help are:

- Use a diary to plan in manageable chunks of work. Try to pace yourself and build this up gradually.
- You may have missed social activities whilst in hospital. Reward yourself with spending time with friends. They may want to ask you about your time in hospital, so it may be worth thinking about what you want to share with them.
- Try to have a good work / life balance and gradually re-engage with your hobbies

or fun activities if you can. This will help you go back to your normal routine more quickly.

It is really important that you get enough sleep. Tips to help you sleep include:

- Switch off technology and keep lights dim to encourage melatonin production. Get some sunlight in the morning as this will switch off the melatonin and make you more alert.
- Avoid caffeine close to bedtime. Try a warm milky drink or herbal tea in the evening instead.
- Although it's really tempting, don't try and catch up on sleep at weekends: Late nights and long lie-ins can disrupt our body clock.



Tips to help you relax

- Breathing exercises can help you relax. Think of a calming or relaxing colour and as you breathe in for 5 seconds imagine the colour filling your body. As you breathe out for 5 seconds imagine the colour moving throughout your body
- It can be helpful to distract yourself with a game, puzzle or other activity.
- Talking things through with someone you trust can be helpful to gain another perspective on what is making you feel stressed.
- Exercise and other physical activity produce endorphins. These are chemicals in the brain that act as natural painkillers, improve our sleep and reduce stress.
- If we notice we are engaging in negative thinking, we can challenge this with positive self-talk. Repeating to yourself a phrase such as 'It is normal to feel stressed but I can get through this' can be really helpful.
- There are lots of apps which can be used on-the-go. **Catch It** helps you to monitor your mood and your thoughts and find more balanced alternatives. The **Moodfit** app has mindfulness tools and a gratitude diary.

Who can I talk to?

A lot of people find it helpful to speak to someone they trust, for example a parent, carer or friend when they are feeling stressed or are finding things difficult.

If you do not want to talk about how you are feeling, sometimes it can be helpful to write your thoughts down in a journal.

Some other people who may be able to help you are

- Your teacher
- Your GP
- School nurse



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<https://www.accessable.co.uk>



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