

Horton Day Case Unit

# Information and advice after a surgical procedure under a general anaesthetic





## Driving

Anaesthetic drugs remain in the body for up to 48 hours and gradually wear off over this time. After your anaesthetic, while you still have the drugs in your body, it is important that you **do not drive a car or any other vehicle, or a bicycle, for 48 hours after your anaesthetic.**

After this time you need to consider whether your wound or any pain may prevent you from driving. An indication of whether you are able to drive safely is if you are able to perform an emergency stop comfortably. We suggest that you get into your car and while it is parked see if you can perform an emergency stop. When we discharge you we will give you specific instructions relating to driving after the type of surgery you have had.

## The next 24 hours

- **Do not be left on your own for the next 24 hrs**
- Do not operate machinery or appliances – e.g. cooker, kettle
- Do not lock yourself in the bathroom or toilet, or make yourself inaccessible to the person looking after you
- Drink plenty of fluids and eat a light diet, avoiding heavy or greasy foods
- Avoid alcohol
- Arrange some time off work and avoid strenuous exercise
- Do not make any important decisions or sign any legal or other important documents.

## Discharge information

### **Follow up**

A follow up appointment is not always needed. If the doctor has asked to see you again you will receive an appointment letter in the post.

Follow up appointment not needed / needed in ..... weeks.

## How to contact us

If you have any problems overnight tonight or over the next 24 hours such as:

- **New fresh or increased bleeding**
- **Pain that is not controlled with pain killers**
- **Vomiting that prevents you from getting enough fluids**
- **Difficulty in passing urine**

**please contact:**

E ward, Horton 01295 229216 (24hours)

Day Case Unit Horton 01295 229383 (9am-5pm)

**All gynaecology patients** should contact their nearest gynaecology inpatient ward if any problems or concerns arise over the following 48 hours.

G ward, Horton 01295 229088

Gynaecology Ward JR11 Oxford 01295 222001 or 222002

After this time all patients should contact their own GP.

## Pain relief at home – a guide to your painkillers and how to take them

You may have been given more than one type of painkiller to take home with you. This is because each type of painkiller works in a different way to help relieve your pain. The types of painkiller are:

- Paracetamol
- An anti-inflammatory, for example, Diclofenac or Ibuprofen
- A morphine based painkiller, for example, Codeine Phosphate, Tramadol

It is safe to take the different types of painkiller together or at different times of the day. The following section will help you choose which painkiller to take according to the severity of the pain.

### **Mild Pain**

Take your paracetamol regularly as prescribed on the prescription label. Do not take more than 8 tablets in 24 hours.

### **Moderate pain**

Take your paracetamol regularly and also your anti-inflammatory painkiller as described on the prescription label.

If you have not been prescribed an anti-inflammatory painkiller, take your morphine based painkiller as described on the prescription label and also take your paracetamol.

You may find that you only need to take the morphine based painkiller once or twice during the day.

### **Severe pain**

Take all your painkillers on a regular basis as described on the prescription labels. It may be of benefit to take your paracetamol and morphine based ones together and to take the anti-inflammatory ones 2-3 hours later.

The morphine based painkiller may cause constipation. If this happens, drink plenty of fluids and increase your intake of dietary fibre.

It is advisable to take only 30mg (1 tablet) of codeine at first. If the pain settles then there is no need to take any more. If the pain does not settle then a further 30mg (1 tablet) may be taken.

## How long will I need to take my painkillers?

As healing occurs you will feel less pain. Once your pain is controlled and is mild, you should only take paracetamol. If your pain remains severe for more than a few days or is not relieved by your painkillers, you should contact your GP.

Never give prescribed tablets to other people as they may not be safe for them to take. Any left over painkillers should be taken to your local pharmacy for safe disposal.

**Keep all medicines out of the reach of children.**

### **Pain relief**

### **Next due at**

Paracetamol

.....

Ibuprofen

.....

Codeine phosphate

.....

Other

.....

## Let us know your views

We would like to hear your comments or suggestions

Please contact us at:

[horton.daycase@orn.nhs.uk](mailto:horton.daycase@orn.nhs.uk)

Alternatively you can write to:

Lynne Beeson  
Sister  
Day Case Unit  
Horton General Hospital  
Oxford Road  
Banbury  
OX16 9AL

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **[PALSJR@orh.nhs.uk](mailto:PALSJR@orh.nhs.uk)**

Lynne Beeson  
Sister, Horton Day Case Unit  
Version 4, July 2011  
Review, July 2014  
Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust  
Oxford OX3 9DU  
[www.oxfordradcliffe.nhs.uk/patientinformation](http://www.oxfordradcliffe.nhs.uk/patientinformation)