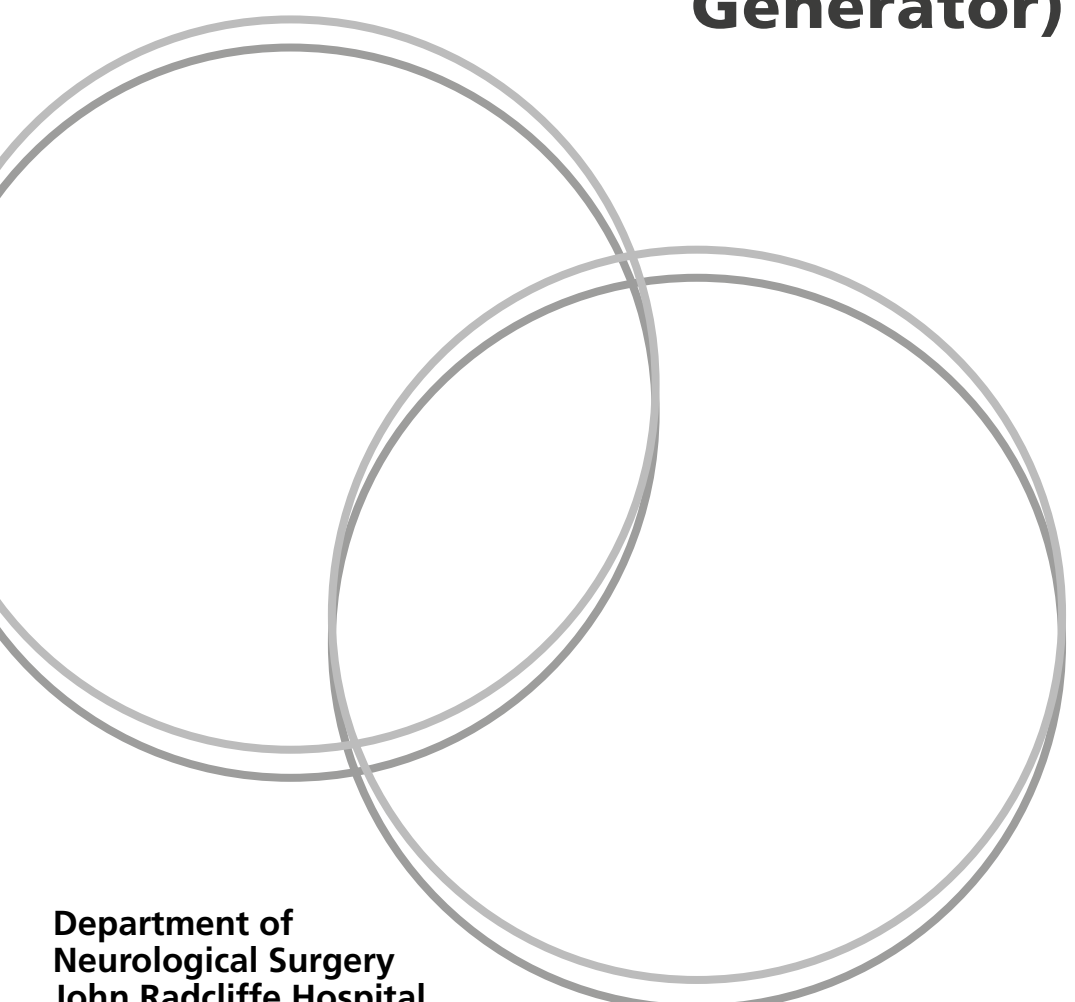


# Discharge Advice for People Going Home After the Change of an IPG (Implantable Pulse Generator)



Department of  
Neurological Surgery  
John Radcliffe Hospital

This leaflet contains answers to some of the questions people most often ask when they go home. It is intended as a guide. If you have any specific queries that are not answered here, please discuss these with your Movement Disorder Team nurse or doctor.

## Going home

You may feel concerned about the thought of returning home after your operation. Hopefully during your stay with us your questions will have been answered. This leaflet has been designed by your nurses to give you support and guidelines about your recovery at home.

We feel it is important that you do not feel alone and isolated at home, so please do not hesitate to call us if you need specific advice. Please contact the Neuromodulation Movement Disorder Nurses on:

Telephone: **01865 231 876**

between the hours of 8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Or contact the ward on:

Telephone: **01865 231 526**.

Alternatively your GP and Practice Nurse are there to help, as are the secretaries for your consultants and doctors at the hospital.

## **How do I look after my wound?**

If you have stitches that dissolve (do not need to be removed) you will be advised how to take care of them by a member of the Movement Disorder Team. You must not use any shampoo or body wash that contains conditioner. If you have stitches that need to be removed, they will need to be taken out on the 10 to 14 days after the operation. You will need to make an appointment with your Practice Nurse to do this at your GP's surgery.

As the wound is already healing it does not need any special attention. It is better to have a shower rather than a bath. This prevents the wound from becoming sodden (soaking wet), which can increase the risk of infection and delay healing.

**You must contact the team at the hospital as a matter of urgency if you notice any of the following symptoms. They may mean that you have an infection which needs treatment with antibiotics:**

- Any leakage from the wound. This may be brown, green, or clear.
- An increase in soreness or very bad itching around the wound which happens a few days after you have returned home.
- Redness or any swelling or pain at or around your wound site.
- Any fever/high temperature.

**If this happens outside of normal office hours you must contact your GP who will be able to contact the Neurosurgical team at the hospital. If your GP surgery is closed they will have an 'out of hours' service that you can access by calling 111.**

## **How soon will I be getting back to normal?**

You may feel tired in the days following your surgery. As you begin to feel less tired, you may want to do more as each day passes. There are no restrictions on doing things such as seeing friends, going shopping and travelling but we advise you not to do anything too strenuous or that puts pressure on your wound.

## **About the stimulator**

Depending on your type of stimulator, you may have been given a booklet written by the company which made your stimulator. If this is the case, please read it carefully. If there is anything that is not clear, do not hesitate to ask your nurse to contact a member of the Movement Disorder Team. If you need any of the following procedures in the future please contact the Movement Disorder Team for advice:

- surgery
- scans
- invasive procedures (a procedure which might cause bleeding)
- dental treatment.

If you are due to have surgery there may be certain equipment that cannot be used by your surgeon during the operation because of your deep brain stimulator system. This most commonly concerns equipment to stop bleeding, using a technique known as electrocautery or diathermy. It may also be necessary to turn your stimulator off before the operation and back on afterwards. It is important that your surgeon is aware of what the safety restrictions are. Please ask your surgeon to contact us for advice before the operation.

Until recent years it was not safe to have an MRI scan at all if you had a deep brain stimulator system implanted. Many of the stimulator systems that we are implanting these days will allow you to have an MRI scan, but only using very special MRI restrictions.

These restrictions are complicated and are different depending on which company made the DBS system. **You must contact the Movement Disorder team before having an MRI scan.** You must never agree to having an MRI until you have confirmed with us and the person performing the scan that it is safe for you to do so. You must tell the person requesting the MRI scan that you have a deep brain stimulator implanted.

When you are out, you must remember to watch out for signs asking people with cardiac pacemakers to see a member of staff. This is because your neuro-stimulator works in a similar way to cardiac pacemakers and there may be special precautions you need to take. We will tell you about these before you leave hospital and you will be given an identity card with details of your stimulator. Remember to carry this with you.

## **Will my medication be changed?**

It is unlikely that your medications will be changed after your battery change. If you have stopped any blood thinning medications in preparation for surgery please ask a member of the team when it should be re-started. If you are unsure about the medication you should be taking please discuss this with us before you leave the ward. Once you get home, if you experience any symptoms that are unusual for you, please consult your GP or the ward.

## **What about work?**

How quickly you return to work depends on what you do for a job. You should discuss this with your doctor before you leave hospital. It is not generally advisable to return to work until your stitches have been removed or fully dissolved. If you need a Sickness Certificate please ask for this before you go home.

## **When can I resume sexual activity?**

The simple answer to this is whenever you are ready. If you are unsure about how your medications affect any contraception you are taking, please ask your GP or pharmacist for advice. The stimulator itself should have no effects on any method of contraception used.

## **Will I be able to drive?**

There are no specific rules regulating driving after an IPG (battery) change. However, if you have had the battery implanted in your abdomen (stomach), you may need to wait until the wound has healed. This is because to carry out an emergency stop you need to be able to use your stomach muscles and doing this with the pressure from the seat belt may damage your stitches. Likewise, if the seat belt is pressing on the stitches in your chest you will need to take extra care. If possible have the shoulder strap on the opposite side to you stitches. This may mean sitting in a different seat. If you have had a general anaesthetic, you cannot drive for 48 hours

## **What about complications?**

You have already started on the road to a good recovery, and we are confident that this should continue at home. Sometimes, for whatever reason, people may develop post-operative complications or side effects from stimulation. Please see your GP or phone the ward if you experience:

- lethargy or tiredness that doesn't improve
- any chest pain or calf pain
- vomiting or feeling sick.

## Going home checklist:

- Tablets and a discharge advice sheet
- Any of your own tablets which you brought with you
- Transport arranged – your own or hospital transport if necessary
- All your belongings, including any valuables we have locked away and any card etc.
- Letter for your GP and Practice Nurse



## **Follow-up/how to contact us**

### **Consultant's secretaries:**

Telephone: **01865 234 838**

### **Consultant Neuropsychologist:**

Telephone: **01865 234 264**

### **Movement Disorder Team Nurses:**

Telephone: **01865 231 876**

### **Functional Neurosurgery Service Administrator:**

Telephone: **01865 234 838**

### **Neuroscience inpatients ward reception:**

Telephone: **01865 231 526**

Email: **neuromodulation@ouh.nhs.uk**

A member of the team is usually available between the hours of 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday. As we are working with patients we may not be able to answer your call, but please leave an answer phone message and we will return your call at the earliest opportunity.





## Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

Author: Oxford Surgical Movement Disorder Team  
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Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
[www.ouh.nhs.uk/information](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/information)



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[charity@ouh.nhs.uk](mailto:charity@ouh.nhs.uk) | 01865 743 444 | [hospitalcharity.co.uk](http://hospitalcharity.co.uk)

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