

What can I do about my home to help me cope during and after the operation?

There are lots of things that you should think about and the solutions will vary from patient to patient.

- Make sure someone is keeping an eye on your house when in hospital and has a set of keys. Make sure someone is sorting or forwarding your post.
- Think about your return home: Who will do your shopping, cleaning and helping around the house?
- Should you move your bed downstairs or to a room with wider doors (for crutches or a wheelchair).
- Will you be able to access your bathroom?
- If you have narrow areas think about moving obstructions and also loose carpets you may trip over.
- How will you get to your GP or to an outpatient clinic?

Ask for our Therapy Services leaflet for more advice or arrange to see them to discuss your individual circumstances.

If needed ask to meet with a Social Worker.

Bring entertainment with you

This includes telling your visitors you that you will be in hospital. We provide pay TV and telephone and free radio. Many people bring in books, cards, games, portable DVD players and even some hobbies. Ask about this if you wish to bring something in!

What about local rehabilitation?

If you live outside Oxfordshire it will be sensible if you talk to your GP in advance about local rehabilitation facilities, such as a community hospital. You may even be able to visit such a hospital in advance to see what it is like.

More information is available from us or our range of leaflets. Some local questions should be directed to your GP or a physiotherapist.

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Getting ready for
your stay with us

Introduction

In this leaflet, we explain what you can do to make your treatment and recovery as safe and fast as possible.

Exercise

Try to ensure that you remain as physically mobile and active as you can. This will help maintain your muscle strength and size which will be important to your recovery after an operation or prolonged bed rest. Consider asking your GP to refer you to a physiotherapist for specific exercises.

Alcohol

Drinking moderate amounts of alcohol (men = 14 units per week, women = 7 units per week) should not interfere with your operation. If you drink more than this we would suggest you decrease your intake so that you do not risk withdrawal symptoms in hospital, liver inflammation or difficulty in coping with exercise or treatment schedules.

Smoking

Smoking causes significant problems with bone and wound healing (especially plastic surgery), and breathing or heart problems during or after the operation. Many people take this opportunity to give up smoking permanently. Remember smoking is not allowed anywhere on the hospital premises. Consult with your GP for advice. Why not make the decision to stop now?

Skin problems

If you have any skin problems, especially eczema or psoriasis, make sure you tell the surgeon, especially if it sometimes occurs at the site of the planned operation. Treating the skin problem before your admission will reduce the risk of a wound infection.

What about my usual medicines?

Bring them in with you so we know what you usually take. **Most of our patients will be advised to not take any antibiotics for two weeks before any operation.** Check carefully with us so you know if and when you must stop all antibiotics.

What about my mood?

Being in hospital and having an operation can be very unsettling. Some people sail through this and some are understandably depressed by the change in their lifestyle or disability. Think about this and consider chatting to us or your GP in advance if you think you might develop a low mood.

What can I do now to help me after the operation?

If you are having an operation you may well need time to recover fully. We will advise you in hospital and arrange things like crutches, splints or braces if required. Chat to your surgeon and ask what aids you are likely to need afterwards. If you will need crutches, a walking frame or a wheelchair then ask us or your GP to arrange for you to try these out in advance. This may turn up unexpected problems which could be fixed in advance, for example discovering that your painful shoulder prevents you using crutches!