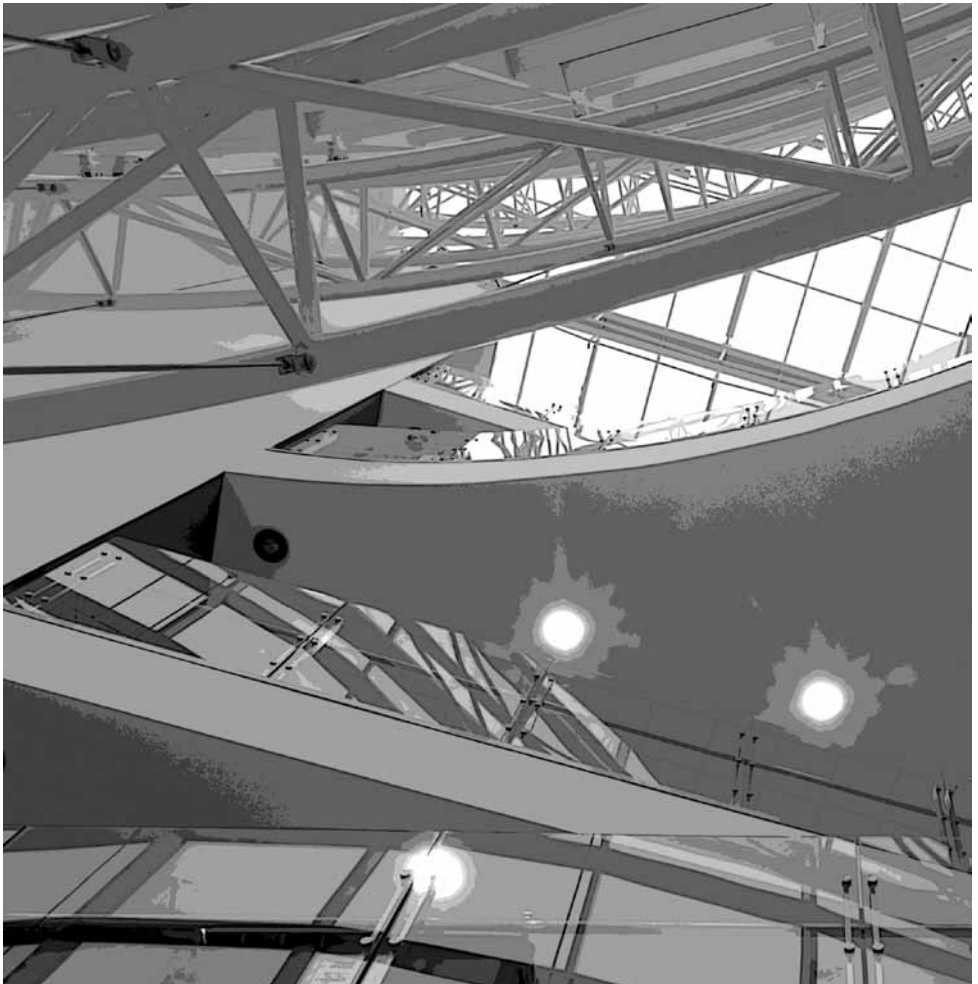


Department of Neurosciences

Discharge following DBS for Pain

Information for patients



This leaflet contains answers to some of the questions patients 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 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:

Clinical Nurse Specialists: Tel: **01865 231874**

Alternatively your GP and Practice Nurse are there to help, as is Professor Aziz's and Mr Green's secretary:

Tel: **01865 234605**

Or you can contact your ward.

How do I look after my wounds?

Your stitches or staples need to be taken out on the 10-14th day after the operation. This may be done before you go home. If not, then you will need to make an appointment with the Practice Nurse to do this at your GP's surgery. As the wound is already healing it does not need any special attention. A shower is preferable to a bath. This prevents the wound from becoming sodden (soaking wet), which can increase the risk of infection and delay healing.

You must see your Doctor as a matter of urgency, if you notice any of the following symptoms. They may indicate an infection that needs treatment with antibiotics:

- Any leakage from the wound. This may be brown, green, or clear.
- An increase in soreness or very bad itching after initial improvement post-operatively.
- Redness or any swelling or pain at or around the wound site.
- Any fever/high temperature.

Please also contact the team at the Hospital.

How soon will I be getting back to normal?

As soon as the initial tiredness passes you can look forward to gradually getting back to normal. It is quite normal to feel very tired for the first couple of weeks, and we advise you to take plenty of rest during the day. 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.

About the stimulator

You should have been given a booklet that is written by the company who made your stimulator. 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 team.

If you need any surgery, X-rays, invasive procedures, (a procedure that might cause bleeding), or dental treatment (which might also involve ultrasonic probes) in the future, please contact the Nurse Specialist for advice.

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 neurostimulator works in a very similar way to these and there may be special precautions you need to take. Before you leave hospital you will be given an identity card with details of your stimulator. Remember to carry this with you.

Will my medication be changed?

Every patient responds differently to his or her medication and to this type of surgery. Your medication may be changed before you leave hospital, and if so, a member of the team will discuss this with you. 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 contact the ward, or the Nurse Specialist.

What about work?

How quickly you return to work depends on what you do. You should discuss this with your Doctor before you leave hospital, or at your Outpatient appointment. A period of 4-6 weeks off work is not unusual. 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 oral contraception, 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?

You should not drive for six weeks after your Deep Brain Stimulator operation. By law, you must inform the DVLA and your insurance company of your operation. They will tell you if there are any specific regulations, or of changes to your policy after Deep Brain Stimulation.

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:

- any different, worsening or sudden headache
- any neck stiffness, high temperature or pain when you look at light
- a rash
- lethargy or tiredness that doesn't improve
- any chest pain or calf pain
- fits or "funny turns"
- blurred vision, or worsening vision
- drowsiness, confusion, or any weakness in the arms or legs
- any vivid dreams or hallucinations
- vomiting or feeling sick.

Going home checklist

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

Follow-up / How to contact us

You will be given an Outpatient appointment – either before you leave the ward or sent in the post. If you have not received anything by 4 weeks after discharge from hospital, please contact one of the following:

Professor Aziz's and Mr Green's secretary: 01865 234605

Clinical Nurse Specialists: 01865 231874

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**

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