

Early mobilisation in hospital

a guide to help your recovery

Information for patients



What is early mobilisation?

You will need to get moving (mobilise) soon after your surgery or admission to hospital. This will help you to avoid many of the potential problems which can develop after surgery or a stay in hospital.

What will happen when I come to pre-assessment or when I am admitted to the ward?

You need to tell us if you have any mobility restrictions (anything which affects your ability to move around) or limitations. We need to know how you can be transferred from bed to chair or wheelchair (if you use a hoist or banana board). We also need to know how far you can walk and if you need any help or walking aids (stick, Zimmer frame). You may bring with you any equipment you need to help you move around.

Why it is important to mobilise when I am in hospital?

- It can help you to recover more quickly.
- It can build your strength.
- It can prevent problems after your operation.
- It can help keep you independent with your daily activities or routine.
- It can build your confidence and help you to make plans for your discharge from hospital.



What complications can this help to avoid?

- bed sores
- chest infections (pneumonia)
- wound and urine infections
- blood clots (deep vein thrombosis (DVT) or blood clots which can move into your lungs (pulmonary embolism or PE)
- constipation
- loss of muscle strength, which reduces your fitness and endurance
- loss of confidence and increased anxiety about leaving hospital.



The five main reasons to encourage you to mobilise

1. Early mobilisation and sitting out of bed will increase the blood flow in your limbs and internal organs of your body. This can prevent blood clots from developing and can help you avoid wound infections.

Increasing the blood flow and removing the pressure on your limbs and other part of your body can also prevent bed sores from developing.

2. Moving around will help your bowels and gut to start working again. Early return of gut function may prevent wound and urine infections caused by bacteria passing through the gut wall. If your guts are working, this can also stop you from feeling sick and vomiting.
3. Sitting out in the chair and walking will help you to breathe more easily and clear any secretions (thick mucus) by coughing. This can help to prevent you from developing a chest infection.
4. It will maintain your muscle strength, which can help you to keep your normal independence and confidence.
5. It can help you to be fit, both mentally and physically, for your discharge from hospital. It can reduce any anxiety you may have and help with planning your discharge.

The five steps to achieve early mobilisation

Steps you can take to help achieve early mobilisation:

1. We will encourage you to get moving as soon as possible. This involves getting you out of bed the day of your surgery or the day after surgery, or as soon as possible after you are admitted. We can give you painkillers if you need them to help you move.
2. We will help you to get out of bed and move increasing distances on the ward every day, until you are discharged home.
3. If you have problems walking, you will be referred to the physiotherapist for assessment. They will help to build a personalised and realistic mobility plan for you. We will also help you to move around.
4. Walking aids will be provided, such as a stick, Zimmer frame, crutches, or stand frame.
5. If you cannot walk, you will be taught new techniques for transferring from bed to chair or wheelchair. We will also teach you gentle exercises.

What will happen when I am discharged from hospital?

If you need help at home, your mobility will be assessed by the physiotherapist before you leave hospital. We will plan your discharge together.

Further questions

If you have any queries or would like further advice, please contact your pre-assessment nurse (before you come to hospital) or talk to your nurse on the ward.

Pre-operative Assessment

John Radcliffe Hospital

Tel: **01865 220 640**

(Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 5.00pm)

Churchill Hospital

Tel: **01865 231938**

Or **01865 226 983** or **01865 226 982**

(Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 5.00pm)

Horton General Hospital

Tel: **01295 229 375**

(Monday to Thursday, 8.00am to 5.00pm)

Urology Outpatients department (Wytham wing)

Tel: **01865 572 373**

(Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 5.00pm)

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

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