



Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS)

Gynaecology Surgery
Information for patients



What is Enhanced Recovery?

Enhanced Recovery is a new way of improving the experience and wellbeing of people who need major surgery. It is a guideline for all the professionals involved in looking after you. Its aim is to help you to recover sooner, so that life can return to normal as quickly as possible. The programme focuses on making sure you are actively involved in your recovery.

There are five main elements:

- planning and preparation before admission (including nutrition and physical fitness before surgery)
- reducing the physical stress of the operation
- a structured approach to pre-operative (before surgery), intra-operative (during surgery) and post-operative (after surgery) management, including pain relief and early nutrition
- early mobilisation (getting you moving as soon as possible)
- early discharge from hospital the following day.

We will encourage you to start moving as soon as possible. This will involve getting you out of bed on the day of your surgery and assisting you to walk increasing distances on the ward until you are discharged home.

Planning and preparation before your operation

Your surgeon will have assessed you as potentially suitable for following the Enhanced Recovery After Surgery programme (ERAS). If you would like to follow the programme you will receive further information at your pre-operative assessment appointment.

Keeping active

To help you prepare physically for your operation and recovery, it is important to keep as active as you can and, where possible, increase your activity levels. The current recommendation is 150 minutes of 'moderate' intensity exercise a week, in at least 10 minute sessions. Improving your fitness could be achieved through simple changes to your routine, such as increasing the speed and frequency of walking.

Here for Health – Health Improvement Advice Centre

Oxford University Hospital health improvement advice centre, offering a range of tailored support for healthy living and wellbeing, including giving up smoking, reducing alcohol consumption, becoming more active and weight management.

Please ask your surgical team for a referral, or drop in for advice at the centre in Blue Outpatients on Level 2 of the John Radcliffe Hospital.

Tel: **01865 221 429**

(9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday)

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

Website: **www.ouh.nhs.uk/HereforHealth**

What happens after the operation?

Below is an example of what to expect after your operation:

Day of surgery

You will be returned to the ward in the afternoon and will be able to have a drink. We will encourage you to sit out of bed in the chair. Please ask if you need help to get to the toilet.

We will help you to walk short distances, as and when you can (ideally at least 2 short walks). Make sure you are resting enough to recover in between.

Post-operative day 1

You should now be able to walk short distances comfortably (ideally at least one long walk, longer than the ones you took yesterday), eat and drink and be passing urine with minimal help getting to and from the toilet.

When you have met the criteria for being able to leave hospital (see page 7), you will be discharged.

You are likely to be ready to be collected by 10.30am. Please make sure you feel comfortable prior to going home. Let us know if you have any discomfort.

Further information can be found on our website:
www.ouh.nhs.uk/patientinformation

- Anaesthesia explained
- Laparoscopic Assisted Surgery
- Preventing blood clots whilst in hospital

Sugar-free chewing gum to aid bowel function

After your surgery it can take some time for your bowels to start working again.

Research studies have shown that chewing sugar-free gum stimulates the gut to start working again after surgery, which may benefit your recovery.

Please do not chew gum within the 6 hour period before your surgery, as this may lead to your surgery being cancelled.

Early mobilisation

You will need to get moving (mobilise) soon after your surgery. This is one of the most important parts of the Enhanced Recovery programme. It can help to prevent complications such as chest infections, pneumonia and developing blood clots (e.g. deep vein thrombosis (DVT) or pulmonary embolism (PE)).

Moving around will also get your bowels and gut working, which will help to stop you from feeling sick. This means you will be able to eat and drink sooner, giving your body energy to recover.

It will involve sitting out of bed for increasing lengths of time and walking increasing distances.

After the the catheter has been removed, you will be encouraged to dress in your usual clothes during the day and nightwear during the night only. Please make sure you have some clean clothes with you and that the clothing is suitable, e.g. loose fitting and comfortable.

Leaving hospital

The Enhanced Recovery After Surgery programme sets out goals and targets for you to achieve at set days after your operation. Your discharge from hospital is also based on you reaching set goals. When you have achieved these, you will be discharged. These goals include:

- for staff to assess you as medically fit for discharge
- to be controlling your pain effectively with oral analgesics (painkillers)
- to be eating and drinking, with no nausea or vomiting
- to be independently mobile (able to get yourself out of bed and on/off the toilet)
- to be passing good amount of urine.

You will need to make your own arrangements for discharge, including transport and ensuring that you have adequate support at home.

Please make sure you have a supply of paracetamol at home, ready for your discharge from hospital. These can be purchased cheaply from your local pharmacy or supermarket. If you have any questions or concerns about leaving hospital, please speak to your ward nurse.

Further information about leaving hospital can be found in the following patient information booklet. This is available on the ward (ask your ward nurse if you have not received it) or can be found on our website:

www.ouh.nhs.uk/patientinformation

- Planning your discharge – making preparations for your return home

You will be given a discharge letter, advice and contact details for the ward. You should ask for a sick note, if needed. Before you leave the ward, please check you have received any medication you need for your recovery period at home.

Follow-up after discharge

You may be a little worried about returning home when you have been discharged from hospital after an operation. However, all the professionals involved in looking after you will have decided that you are well enough to leave hospital. You will need time to recover – this may take some weeks or months.

You will be contacted by a nurse two days after you have been discharged from hospital, and also one week after you have left hospital, to check how you are recovering. Your consultant or a member of their team will then contact you one month after you have left hospital.

At this point it will be decided whether you need to be seen in the Outpatients department and, if so, when this appointment will need to be made. This may be up to three months after your discharge from hospital. A letter will be sent to your home address with the details of this appointment. If you have any questions about this, please contact your consultant's secretary.

If you require urgent advice or have a problem after you have left hospital, please follow the information given to you by your nurse when you are discharged from hospital.

Research studies

Many research studies are carried out at the Oxford University Hospitals and you may be eligible to take part in one.

During your visit you may be approached about research studies. If you would like further information, please ask your healthcare professional.

Useful resources

[smokefree.nhs.uk](https://www.smokefree.nhs.uk)

(NHS stop smoking advice)

www.ouh.nhs.uk

(Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust)

www.britishpainsociety.org

(The British Pain Society)

www.rcoa.ac.uk

(Royal College of Anaesthetists)

Enhanced Recovery Team

My Consultant is

My Matron is

My Pre-Op nurse is

My Ward Nurse is

If you need an interpreter or would like this information leaflet in another format, such as Easy Read, large print, Braille, audio, electronically or another language, please speak to the department where you are being seen. You will find their contact details on your appointment letter.

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www.ouh.nhs.uk/information

