

Information about your surgery and the Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) Programme



This booklet will give you some information about the **Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) Programme.**

The aim of the ERAS Programme is to get you back to full health as quickly as possible after your surgery, and we encourage you to play an active part in your recovery.

Research has shown that after surgery, the sooner you move about and the earlier you are eating and drinking, the speedier your recovery will be. You are also less likely to develop complications after surgery, such as chest infections and blood clots.

The main elements of ERAS programme include:

1. Pre-operative assessment and preparation
2. Good care planning and pain relief after surgery
3. Early mobilisation (i.e. moving about) and return to eating and drinking as soon as possible after surgery.

If there is anything in this booklet you are not sure about, please ask.

Things that affect your Health

Stop Smoking

If you are a smoker we encourage you to stop. We understand that trying to stop at this stressful time is especially difficult; however, stopping smoking reduces complications such as chest and wound infections and helps you recover more quickly.

There are different options for people who want to stop smoking. You can talk to your specialist nurse or named nurse, your community pharmacist (local chemist) or your GP.

For further information and help on stopping smoking, please contact:

- Smoke free services 0141 201 9825
(answer machine service after 5pm)
- Smokeline..... 0800 84 84 84
- Quitline..... 0800 00 22 00
(NHS 24 hour Helpline)

Alcohol

If you drink alcohol try to reduce how much you drink in the weeks before your surgery.

You must not drink alcohol 48 hours before surgery as it can increase complications during recovery.

Nutrition

We advise you to eat a healthy diet to make sure your body is prepared for surgery. Eating less fat and sugary foods, and eating plenty of fruit and vegetables can all help prevent complications following your surgery.

Nutrition before and after your surgery is a very important part of your treatment plan. Research has shown that carbohydrate drinks can help you feel better after surgery and improve recovery. We will give you four carbohydrate drinks to take the evening before your surgery and two the morning of your surgery. We will give you instructions when to stop eating and drinking before your surgery.

Exercise

Gentle exercise is advised to keep you healthy. This is particularly important before and after surgery as it can help with weight loss, muscle strength and stamina.

Before your surgery

Pre Assessment

Before your surgery you will attend a pre-assessment clinic. This may be a few weeks before your surgery. This is to make sure you are well enough and fully prepared for coming into hospital, your surgery and going home from hospital (your discharge).

At this clinic you may meet members of the team looking after you, including the surgeon, specialist nurse, anaesthetist, dietician, physiotherapist and if required occupational therapist.

The pre operative assessment nurse will assist in organising all your tests and co-ordinating your appointments. You may have several test and investigations at this clinic which may include:

- Medical history
- Blood tests
- Blood Pressure, temperature and pulse
- Height and Weight
- Consent for your surgery
- ECG (tracing of your heart)
- Chest X-ray

Further tests may include a heart scan or lung function test. However, you may not have these tests at the pre operative assessment clinic, but we will arrange another date for you to have these.

The nurse at the clinic may tell you the date and time of your hospital admission for surgery or we may send you a letter in the post. We may also send you an appointment to attend a physiotherapy pre admission group information session.

You will also receive any other relevant information such as fasting instructions (when to stop eating and drinking before your surgery), expected date of discharge from hospital etc. We may also give you carbohydrate drinks, these drinks will give you the much needed energy to help you recover.

Physiotherapy

The physiotherapist will see you before or during your hospital stay, to help you to recover from your surgery as quickly and fully as possible. They will also give you an information leaflet to remind you of their advice.

Your physiotherapist will give you information to make sure you are comfortable after your surgery as well as information to help your initial recovery. This information will include:

- breathing and circulatory exercises to help reduce your risk of breathing and circulatory complications.
- teaching you pelvic floor and abdominal muscle exercises to assist your recovery.
- advice to get you back to everyday activities, exercise and work as appropriate.

It is important for you to continue with the exercises and advice, on a long term basis, to maintain the improvement following your surgery.

Preparing for Surgery

The day before your surgery you will be able to eat and drink as normal. **You should drink four cartons of the carbohydrate drinks over the course of the evening before your surgery and two cartons on the morning of your surgery. We will give you instructions on when to stop eating and drinking before your surgery.**

Day of Surgery

We will admit you to a 'Same day' Admission area on the day of your surgery.

Please bring in any medication you are taking and give this to the nurse responsible for your care.

On admission a member of the nursing staff will welcome you and check all your details. The nurse will discuss your care and treatment with you (and your family if you wish).

We will give you compression stockings to wear all the time you are in hospital and after you go home. These reduce the risks of blood clots in your legs and lungs. We may also give you an injection everyday throughout your hospital stay to further reduce the risks of blood clots.

After your surgery

After your surgery you will spend some time in the recovery area. The nursing staff will regularly monitor your blood pressure, pulse, temperature, oxygen levels and give you appropriate pain relief.

You may have a tube into a vein, 'a drip', to replace lost fluids but we will remove this as soon as possible. We will offer you a drink as soon as you wake up.

You may also have a face mask or a nasal cannula to give you oxygen.

You may have a urinary catheter 'a tube into your bladder'. You may also have a pack to prevent bleeding in your vagina, which we will remove as soon as it is possible after your surgery.

Pain

You may have a Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA) pump. This is a syringe pump which contains morphine. You press the pumps handset anytime you feel pain and the morphine is administered intravenously as required every 5 minutes allowing you to control your own pain relief. There is a safety mechanism on the syringe which prevents you from receiving too much painkiller anyone time. Do **not** be afraid to press your handset whenever you feel any pain, nursing staff will instruct you how you use it. If you do not have a PCA please tell the nursing staff whenever you feel any pain and they will give you appropriate pain relief.

Sometime the painkillers we give you following your surgery can make you constipated, we will give you medicine to take to help prevent this.

Nausea or sickness

You may experience some nausea or sickness however we will give you medication to help prevent this. If you have had your carbohydrate drinks before your surgery this will reduce any nausea or sickness. It is important to eat and drink soon after your surgery so if you do feel nauseated please tell the nurse as soon as possible.

Breathing exercises

You should try to take 5 deep breaths in through your nose and slowly out through your mouth. You should try to do this every hour and continue this through your hospital stay. This helps reduce the risks of chest infections.

On return to the ward

After your surgery we will transfer you from the recovery room to the gynaecology ward. We will introduce you to the nurse who will be responsible for your care during your stay in hospital. Your nurse will not always be on duty but the nurses looking after you will introduce themselves to you and answer any questions you or your family may have.

The nursing staff will continue to monitor your progress, checking your blood pressure, pulse and pain control. If you have any IV fluids we will stop these as soon as you are able to drink on your own.

If you have surgery in the morning, about 6 hours after your surgery we will help you out of bed and encourage you to sit for around 2 hours and move around as able.

If you have surgery in the afternoon we will encourage you to do your deep breathing and leg exercises as soon as you return to the ward. You will get up out of bed and walk around the following day.

First day after your surgery

If you have a PCA pump we will stop this. However, we will continue to give you medication (most likely oral painkillers) to control your pain. If you are in pain please tell the nursing staff.

If you have a urinary catheter we will remove this, unless your consultant tells us otherwise.

We will expect you to get out of bed and have a shower, with assistance if required.

You will be able to eat and drink as normal.

We will encourage you to be up out of bed for at least 8 hours with rests throughout the day.

We will encourage you to walk, with assistance if required for short distances around the ward.

The day after your surgery you may see the physiotherapist who will give you advice about moving about and any exercises that will help your recovery.

Second and third day after your surgery

You will continue on oral pain killers as required to keep your pain under control.

You will be eating and drinking as normal.

We will encourage you to get up and move around the ward for at least 8 hours with rest periods throughout the day.

Depending on your overall condition the nursing staff will now start to make arrangements with you and your relatives to allow you to go home.

We will discharge you when:

- Your pain is well controlled
- You are eating and drinking
- You are passing urine normally
- You are up and moving around the ward comfortably.

We will give you further information before you go home regarding what will happen once you go home and what to do if you think there is something wrong along with contact numbers for the ward and the Enhanced recovery nurse.

It is important when you go home to shower every day and look after your wound, we will give you advice on this before you home.

Practical steps to support your recovery

Make plans for going home before you come into hospital. You might find it useful to talk through with a friend, carer or family member to make sure that you have the practical support in place to support your recovery.

My to do list:

- Tell people that you are going into hospital.
- Pack a small bag with toiletries, nightwear etc.
- Bring your medication with you.
- Check that you have support for when you go home.
- Ask about when you can expect to go home.
- Arrange for someone to take you to the hospital and to collect you on the morning of your discharge.

Meeting other patients

Although you may know or meet people who appear to have the same type of condition or undergo similar surgery or treatment, it is important to remember that all patients are different. Two patients with similar conditions may receive alternative treatments and experience different side effects

It may be possible for your specialist nurse to arrange for you to meet a patient who has had similar surgery who can discuss their experiences and how they coped. If this is something you would think would be helpful please ask your specialist nurse.

What will the Enhanced Recovery After Surgery Programme mean for me?

By following the Enhanced Recovery After Surgery Programme, before and after your surgery can help you to:

- **Feel better sooner**
- **Return home sooner**
- **Reduce the risk of complications**
- **Return to normal living sooner**

Therefore you need to:

- Take part in your recovery by following the advice and instructions from the clinical team.
- Be positive about your recovery.
- Start to eat and drink as soon as you are allowed.
- Let staff know if your pain is not well controlled or you feel nauseated.
- Be up out of bed as soon as you can and mobilise around the ward as agreed but not to over exert yourself.
- Understand your daily goals.....remembering little steps go a long way.

Further Information

If you have any questions please ask a member of staff.

For further patient information on Enhanced Recovery After Surgery please visit the following website:

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/enhanced-recovery/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

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