

# Discharge Information Following Elective Hip or Knee Replacement Surgery at Cannock Chase Hospital

Trauma & Orthopaedics

## Introduction

This leaflet has been designed to give you some general information about what to expect on the day of your discharge and when you are back at home. Most of your questions should be answered by this leaflet. However, it is not intended to replace the discussions between you and your Doctor / Nurse / Therapist. If you have any concerns or require further explanations, please discuss this with your healthcare team before leaving the ward.

## What should I expect before I leave the hospital?

When your Doctor, Nurse and Therapists have deemed you safe and ready for discharge, the following arrangements will be made:

### Walking Aids / Equipment

Your Physiotherapist and/or Occupational Therapist will issue any walking aids and/or equipment you need at home. Some items may have been delivered to your home address before or during your hospital stay. Other items will need to be taken with you on the day of your discharge.

### Wound

Your wound dressing will be changed on the day of your discharge.

Your Nurse will tell you when this next needs to be changed and/or when your clips or stitches need to be removed. This is usually between 12-14 days from the date of your operation.

Date for wound check / dressing change / removal of clips

(please circle): .....

- Practice Nurse (please book your own appointment)
- Outpatients Appointment / Nurse Led Clinic (the ward will arrange this and contact you by telephone)
- District Nurse (the ward will arrange this)

District Nurse Telephone Number:.....

**The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.**

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

You will be given a letter, spare dressings, and clip removers / stitch removers before you go home. Please take these with you to your appointment.

## Medication

The hospital pharmacy will dispense any new medications that have been started during your stay. Please follow the instructions on the boxes.

If you are being discharged with enoxaparin injections, you or a family member / friend will be taught how to administer them. You will be given a separate information leaflet detailing the technique to be used. You will also be given a yellow sharps bin to safely dispose of the injections. Your Nurse will show you how to use this. Once you have completed your course of injections, the sharps bin will need to be locked and returned to your own GP.

## Discharge Letter

You will be given a copy of your Discharge Letter before you leave the ward. An electronic copy of this letter will be sent to your GP when you are discharged.

If you require a 'fit note' (sometimes called a 'sick note'), please ask your Doctor or Nurse before leaving the ward.

## Follow-up Appointment

This is usually between 6 – 12 weeks after your operation.

It will be posted to your home address.

If you do not receive one within 4 weeks of your discharge, please contact Hilton Main Ward.

## Transport home

You will need to arrange your own transport home from hospital. You are safe to travel as a passenger in a car.

If you have any difficulties or concerns, please speak to your Nurse or Occupational Therapist.

## What should I do when I get back home?

### Mobilise, exercise and rest

To help strengthen your muscles and get you back to your everyday life, you will need to carry on with the exercises that you have been practicing on the ward. You should exercise, mobilise and rest regularly. Please refer to the information provided to you by your Physiotherapist and take your pain relief medication as advised. You should also continue to use ice therapy if applicable.

If follow up physiotherapy is required, your Physiotherapist will discuss this with you before you leave the ward.

Once you have finished using your walking aids / equipment, please return them as per the instructions below:

If you live in Wolverhampton:

- Walking aids are to be returned when you attend your follow up appointment with the Consultant and/or physiotherapist (this is usually at the Fracture Clinic at New Cross Hospital)
- For all other equipment, contact the Independent Living Service on 01902 553645 to arrange collection

If you live in Cannock or Stafford:

- Contact Medequip on 01785 273950 to arrange collection

**\*\*Please do not return any equipment issued by the Occupational Therapy service to the hospital\*\***

## **Eat well and drink plenty of water**

A healthy balanced diet and good hydration are essential to your recovery and wound healing. Please ensure you eat and drink well after your operation.

You may have been given laxatives to help prevent constipation. Please take these until your bowel function has returned to normal. Eating high fibre foods (such as vegetables, fruit, and cereals) and drinking plenty of water will also help with this. If you do experience problems with constipation, please contact your own GP.

## **Monitor for signs of infection and blood clots**

If the skin around your wound becomes red, hot, swollen, painful or is discharging, please contact your Consultant's Secretary or the Back in Trouble Clinic. These are signs of a possible infection and should not be ignored.

It is expected that you will have some bruising and/or swelling to the operated leg. It may take several weeks for this to return to normal. It will help to rest with your legs elevated for short periods throughout the day. However, if you are concerned about the swelling, or if it becomes worse, please contact your Consultant's Secretary or the Back in Trouble Clinic.

Increased swelling that does not resolve with elevation can be a sign of a blood clot in your leg (deep vein thrombosis). Other signs include unexplained calf pain or tenderness, hotness, and skin discolouration. Signs of a blood clot in your lung include breathlessness, pain in your chest, upper back or ribs which is worse when you breathe in deeply and coughing up blood. Please refer to the 'Are you at risk of a deep vein thrombosis in hospital' leaflet for more information. If you suspect that you have a blood clot, please attend the Emergency Department (A&E) immediately.

To help to prevent blood clots from occurring, please take your enoxaparin injections as instructed. You must complete the full course. Mobilising short distances regularly and keeping well hydrated will also help to reduce the risk.

If you are being discharged with graduated compression stockings, you will be given an extra pair to take home. You should wear your stockings for 6 weeks. You will need to remove them daily to wash your legs but they should be worn throughout the day and night. Please refer to the 'Graduated Compression Stockings' leaflet for advice on how to use and care for your stockings.

## **When can I return to work, resume driving and participate in hobbies?**

### **Returning to work**

This depends on the job that you do and the level of activity it requires. It is normal to take at least 6 weeks off work. It is advisable that you discuss your return to work with your Consultant at your follow up appointment.

### **Driving**

The most important point about driving is that you should feel confident and safe to do so. You must not be taking any medication that affects your ability to think clearly and react quickly and you must be able to comfortably manage an emergency stop. For most people, this is usually after 6 weeks of surgery. Before resuming, it is advisable that you speak to your Consultant as well as your car insurance provider.

### **Hobbies**

This depends on the types of sports and leisure activities you normally do. Your Consultant or Physiotherapist will be able to advise you on this.

## Who should I contact if I have a concern or think there is a problem?

Once you are at home, if you have any questions, queries or concerns that have not been answered by this leaflet, please contact:

**Enhanced Recovery Specialist Nurse**

Weekdays, 8:00am – 4:00pm

01543 576580

**Hilton Main Ward**

24 hours

01543 576580

**Orthopaedic Consultant Secretaries** (ring the Main Switchboard and ask for your Consultant's Secretary)

Weekdays, 9:00am – 4:00pm

01902 307999

**Back in Trouble Clinic** (based in the Fracture Clinic at New Cross Hospital)

Weekdays, 9:00am – 5:00pm

01902 695380

**NHS 111**

## How can I give feedback on the care that I have received?

Patient satisfaction is extremely important to the Elective Orthopaedic Department. Your feedback helps us to improve the service we provide.

Please tell us about your care by visiting the Care Opinion website or by contacting the Patient Experience Team.

[www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk)

**Patient Experience Team**

Telephone: 01902 695362 (10:00am – 3:00pm)

Email: [rwh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:rwh-tr.pals@nhs.net)

## Additional Instructions / Notes

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## English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

## Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

## Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

## Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

## Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

## Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。