

Discharge Information
Following Major
Gynaecological Surgery

Date Reviewed: July 2010

This leaflet aims to answer many of the questions you may have regarding the recovery after your operation. However, you should always follow any specific advice given to you by your consultant or nurse.

General Anaesthesia

Following a general anaesthetic, we advise for you not to consume alcohol, to avoid signing legal documents, and using or operating machinery for a minimum of 24 hours after your surgery. Following major abdominal surgery you should not drive for approximately 4-6 weeks, unless advised by your consultant.

You must be able to perform an emergency stop safely and confidently before you start to drive. Please check with your car insurance company before driving.

Pain Relief

You may have some discomfort after your operation. You will be prescribed some pain relief to take home. Your nurse will explain what they are and how often to take.

If you were not given any pain relief on discharge please use over the counter pain killers i.e., Paracetamol or Ibuprofen based products but please always read the labels/instructions before taking them.

Healing/Wound care

From this operation you will have stitches in place which will either be removed before you go or at your follow-up consultation if they are not dissolvable.

If needed your nurse will give you a spare dressing to take home and change as instructed. Otherwise dressings should be left untouched until you are seen at your follow-up consultation.

All wounds follow several stages of healing; you may experience such sensations as tingling, numbness, itching. These are all normal and part of the healing process.

However, if your wound turns red, starts swelling, feels hot to touch or starts bleeding more extensively you should contact your consultant or the ward.

You may experience light vaginal bleeding for 5-7 days following surgery. This is normal. Please use sanitary towels during this time.

If you experience any sudden onset of pain, heavy bleeding, discoloured or offensive smelling vaginal discharge or generally feeling unwell with a fever you should also contact your consultant or the ward for advice.

Rest and Activity

Your consultant, nurse and physiotherapist will advise you when you can return to normal activities. It is important to follow their instructions and the exercises given by your physiotherapist.

On returning home, it is advisable for someone to look after you for at least a week. However, if there is no help available our nursing staff can advise you on making necessary arrangements.

You must avoid heavy lifting during your recovery time which is normally between 6-8 weeks following surgery.

It is worth remembering that pushing yourself to get back to normal is the quickest way to recover. Usually some form of daily activity, like walking is sensible although this will vary depending on your operation.

Sexual activity should also be avoided for approximately six to eight weeks or as instructed by your consultant.

We advise no swimming until the bleeding has stopped because of a slight risk of infection.

Your consultant's secretary will arrange a follow up consultation to review your progress usually two weeks after your surgery. Please contact their secretary if it has not been arranged.

If you require any other assistance or advice following your operation please contact either the 5th floor south or your consultant's secretary

Contact Numbers for

5th Floor South: 0207 483 5053

Enquiry Helpline: 0207 483 5148

Main switchboard: 0207 586 5959