



Discharge Advice After Spinal Surgery

Introduction

Now you are ready to go home, having recovered from your spinal surgery there are some things you need to be aware of.

Bathing

You should not sit back in a normal bath without a bath seat as this will put strain on your back. Please use a shower instead if you have one, and stand up (or sit on a chair). If you have no shower you will need to obtain a bath seat.

Being Lifted

If you need to be lifted by your parents or carers you may need a hoist for safe lifting. Please ask the Nurses or Physiotherapists how to get hold of one. Do not let anyone lift you under your arms or pull along by the arms. This will put strain on your back and will hurt.

Lifting Objects Yourself

You should do no lifting or carrying of heavy objects for at least a year after surgery.

Feeling Weak

You may feel weak or wobbly for a while. This will pass in time.

Feeling Depressed

If you feel very down whilst in hospital, this is not unusual, especially due to pain and boredom. Try to keep occupied with activities. Encourage people to visit you and cheer you up, watch television, listen to music, read or be read to, do any of these or other activities you can think of and this will help you not to think about any problems. You should try to talk to your friends, family and Nurses if you feel depressed and anything is worrying you.

Exercise

For the first six months at least, if you are able to walk, walking is the only exercise that you should be

doing. You will find out by trial and error how much walking you are able to do. Take it easy, do not rush. Walk at least 2 miles a day.

Medication

You will probably be given tablets or medication to take home for your pain. Do not be surprised if you need some sort of pain relief for at least six months to a year. Try to take the medication only when you need it. When you run out of the medication, your GP can prescribe some more. Your GP will have received a letter from our Doctors about your operation.

Brace

If you have been given a spinal brace or plaster jacket, please make sure you and your family are confident to care for this before you leave the hospital, as it is important that you are comfortable in it. Keep wearing the brace until you are told otherwise by your Consultant at your clinic check ups. If you have any problems once you get home, please contact the ward or the brace technician. Ensure that you have these numbers before you leave hospital.

Out Patient Appointment

You will be given an Out Patient appointment for about six weeks time. Then you will continue to visit your Consultant at specified intervals, usually until your back is fully grown.

Toilet

Sitting on a low level toilet may be uncomfortable. You may need a raised toilet seat so ask us how to get hold of one.

District Nurse

We may have arranged for a District Nurse to visit you on your return home and assess you. If you think you would like their

support, please ask us to contact them before you leave the hospital.

Wheelchair

If you use a wheelchair, our Physiotherapist will be contacting the providers of the wheelchair if any adaptations need to be made now you have your new back. The Physiotherapist will also contact your local Physiotherapist to explain about your operation and the care you might need once you have left hospital.

School

You should remain off school for at least one month after leaving hospital and should then return to school part-time for a while, perhaps mornings only until you feel fit enough to go full time. If your school or college provides Nurses or Physiotherapists and facilities for lying down you may be able to go back to school earlier, but this is up to you. You may need to lie down flat and rest much more often than you did before the surgery. Do not worry you will get stronger each day.

If your school or college needs a letter of explanation about your expected capabilities, please let us know.

Contact

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Disclaimer

Whilst this leaflet aims to provide you with useful advice and information it must be noted that it should only act as a guideline. Should you have any further concerns about this procedure, it is advisable that you discuss it with your Consultant.