

## Day Surgery Unit

# Information for patients undergoing a Varicose veins operation

Veins are the blood vessels that carry the blood back to the heart. Varicose veins are abnormally swollen (dilated) veins that are visible just below the skin.

Varicose veins are due to a fault in the one-way valves inside the veins. These valves normally only allow the blood to flow up the leg towards the heart. If the valves leak, then blood can flow back the wrong way on standing. This reverse flow causes increased pressure on the veins which then swell and become varicose.

During the operation the visible veins are removed (avulsed) through a series of small cuts. The incompetent veins are tied up in the groin and/or behind the knee. The vein in the thigh may also be removed to reduce the risk of varicose veins returning.

### After your operation

You will be given a general anaesthetic, which means you will be put to sleep for the operation. Once you are awake you will return to the ward, your wounds will be checked and you will be encouraged to sleep off the effects of the anaesthetic. You will remain on the ward for a minimum of one hour to allow you to recover.

The surgeon and the anaesthetist must both agree that you are fit to be discharged before you allowed home.



## Patient Information

### Discharge

- Before discharge the nurse will check your wounds and bandages. In order to do this she will ask you to stand up and walk around your bed, whilst you are doing this she will check for spot bleeding. If bleeding does happen, **do not worry**, it is quite common due to pressure on the wounds on standing up. If there are no problems when you stand up a further tubigrip bandage will be applied.
- A letter will be posted to your own GP. This will explain your operation and give details of any medication you have been prescribed.
- If you require an Out-patients appointment you will receive it through the post.
- If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to ask the nursing staff

### Going home

- If you have had a general anaesthetic a responsible adult must collect you from the ward when you are ready to be discharged.
- You **will not** be allowed to go home alone in a taxi
- You must arrange for a responsible adult to stay with you for 24 hours after your operation.

Please note that if you have had sedation; for 24 hours after the procedure, you must not:

- Take alcohol;
- Operate heavy machinery;
- Sign any legally binding documents.

### At home

#### Pain relief

When you are in theatre local anaesthetic will be injected into your wound, this should keep you pain free for 4 to 6 hours, until you reach home.

## Patient Information

You may be given hospital pain killers to take home, if not it is advisable to take your own household painkillers such as:

- Paracetamol
- Ibuprofen

These tablets should be taken **immediately** when you return home, unless otherwise directed by the hospital. This should reduce any pain or discomfort you may suffer. **Please continue to take these tablets regularly for 3 to 4 days.**

**Always read the instructions on medicines carefully.**

### Mobility

- You may walk about as normal once you return home;
- Avoid standing or sitting in the same position for long times;
- When sitting, raise the leg to avoid swelling;
- Your bandages should feel firm but comfortable;
- Your toes should appear pink and warm.

If your bandages appear to be too tight, your toes are cold, you experience pins and needles in them or they are blue or white, loosen your bandages. This should rectify the problem, if it does not, loosen them some more.

**If the problem persists contact your GP immediately**

**If bleeding happens:** apply pressure to the affected area and elevate (raise) your leg for around 15 minutes. Telephone your GP as soon as this occurs.

### Wound care

#### Bathing

- You may have a bath two days after your operation, once the bandages have been removed. If you have paper stitches they may float off. **Do not worry;** your wounds will have healed sufficiently.



## Patient Information

### Further Information

If you require any further information or have any concerns, do not hesitate to contact:

#### **The Day Surgery Unit:**

Telephone 024 7696 6868 or 024 7696 6861

Open 8.00am to 9.00pm.

Or alternatively **contact your own GP.**

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 6868 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

To give feedback on this leaflet please email [feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk)

#### **Document History**

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