

## Hepatic, Pancreatic & Biliary Service

# Going home after your liver resection

You have now recovered enough from your operation to start thinking about going home. The aim of this information sheet is to help you overcome any concerns you may have about going home.

Before you are discharged, there are a few things that the team caring for you will want to be sure of:

- all of your wounds are healing properly
- you are eating and drinking sufficiently
- you are managing to look after yourself
- your pain is under control

If you have concerns about any of the above issues or indeed any issue to do with your recovery please speak to a member of the team.

On the day of discharge you will be given a letter from the ward nurses. A copy of this letter will be sent to your GP. This letter has information about your tablets, your outpatient appointments and includes a section about any referrals that may have been made for you, such as for district nurses.

### Medication

If you require tablets, you will be given a 7 day supply before leaving hospital. The ward nurse will explain to you what they are and how you should take them. Following liver surgery most patients will also take home some injections to prevent clots. You or a carer, such as member of your family, will need to give these injections to you on a daily basis. If you have any concerns about this please discuss them with the ward nurses prior to your discharge.



## Patient Information

### Wounds

If your clips/stitches have not been removed before going home, or if you still have a wound that needs a nurse to care for, the ward nurses will either arrange for a district nurse or you may be asked to make an appointment with the GP practice's nurse. **Make sure you know what the plan is before going home.**

The ward nurses will need to provide you with any necessary dressings to take home for your practice nurse or the district nurse. If your wound has staples, the nurses in the community or at your GP surgery will need a special tool to remove them. The ward will provide you with this prior to discharge. If you are not given the tool to remove the staples or are having issues booking an appointment to have your staples/stitches or wound reviewed, please contact the HPB clinical nurse specialist.

If your wounds are healed, we would ask you to observe them regularly. Please look out for any of the following:

- increased pain or tenderness
- increased swelling or opening of the wound
- redness or warmth around the wound
- if you have a temperature of above 38°C

A wound infection may be developing and you may need antibiotics, so please contact your GP or let the clinical nurse specialist know.

When bathing or showering, **do not** rub the incision site. Instead, let the soapy water run over it. Avoid putting scented soap or sprays near the wound site until healed, as this may cause irritation.

### Pain

It is normal to have some pain around the wound after your return home. The doctor will order some pain killers to take home with you. Take these as directed and if necessary obtain a repeat prescription from your GP.

### Activities

- Listen to your body and be aware of its limitations. Do gentle exercise and build up gradually to resume your normal life style.

## Patient Information

- Avoid heavy lifting with in the first six weeks.
- Check with your doctor before you resume driving. We recommend you wait at least six weeks.
- Rest if you feel tired.
- Do not be feel ashamed if you need to rest or sleep during the day as this is quite normal.

Please continue wearing the support socks until you are fully mobile and taking daily walks. On average this will be for 4-6 weeks.

## Nutritional Support

Eat what appeals to you when you get home. Try to eat a well balanced diet with protein, fruits, bread, milk and vegetables. **Do not** skip meals. Eat small, frequent meals and try to include an evening snack. There are no foods that you have to avoid.

## Support once at home

When you leave hospital you may come across problems that you or your family need to talk to someone about. You may feel anxious and that you have been cut off from the hospital team. These feelings are normal.

There are several ways that you can contact the hospital team:

Ring the **Clinical Nurse Specialist: 024 7696 5618 (Claire Pearce, Michelle Faupel and Jamie Bradley)**.

Ring the **ward you were discharged from** via the hospital switchboard: **024 7696 4000** or **attend ward 22 SAU** (Surgical Assessment Unit).

## Follow-up appointments

The clinical nurse specialist (CNS) will contact you within 4-6 days of your discharge. You will be seen in the HPB consultant led clinic or CNS clinic 3 weeks after your surgery to assess how you are progressing.

Further follow-up may continue at 3 or 6 monthly intervals if appropriate. It is a possibility that you will require blood tests and scans between appointments and these will be requested at the time of attending the outpatients clinic.

## Patient Information

You may find you will also require further follow up with your cancer specialist (oncologist). This would be requested from your first follow up appointment after your surgery depending on your histology results.

If you have any problems at any time appointments are always available at the outpatient clinics or with your clinical nurse specialist, who you can contact on 024 7696 5618 (Claire Pearce, Michelle Faupel and Jamie Bradley).

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 5618 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)

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