



Enhanced Recovery Programme after colorectal surgery

i Important information
for all ERAS patients
following colorectal surgery

About this booklet

This booklet provides information for patients about the Enhanced Recovery Programme after surgery and what to expect when you go home.

What to expect when you go home

The Enhanced Recovery Programme means you will recover more quickly and return home faster. Your recovery will continue at home. This leaflet gives you important advice about what to expect and what to do if you have any concerns.

Although most people recover well, some issues can occur after you go home. If you are worried about any of the following, please follow the instructions at the end of this leaflet.

Abdominal pain

Some windy pains in your stomach are common in the week after surgery as the bowel function returns. Also, you will experience discomfort from your wound for a few weeks. Severe pains, however, can be a sign of the bowel join leaking inside you. This is a serious complication but does not happen very often.

If, in the first ten days when you go home, you:

- get severe pains lasting more than a couple of hours at one time;
- have a fever; or
- feel very unwell.

It is important you contact us immediately. Telephone numbers are at the end of this leaflet. If out of hours or you are unsure at all then please attend your nearest Accident and Emergency department.

Wound Care

You may bathe and shower as normal after going home. It is normal for your wound to be uncomfortable for a few weeks after surgery and it may also look a little red. You should contact us if your wound becomes very painful and swollen or if it starts to leak fluid.

Bowel Function

When you have had some bowel removed, your bowel habit is unlikely to be as it was before your surgery and may take some time to settle down. Most people do not have significant problems.

If your bowel motions are loose, you should concentrate on drinking plenty of fluids. If this does not settle down after a few days you can try over-the-counter diarrhoea treatments from your chemist but if you need advice regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact us.

If you get constipation, you should drink plenty of fluids and continue to keep mobile and exercise regularly. If this does not improve you could try over-the-counter laxatives.

Passing Urine

After you have had a catheter it can take a few days for you to feel like you are passing urine normally again. If you continue to have problems or feel a burning or stinging sensation every time you pass urine you should contact us as you may have an infection and we will advise you on how to submit a specimen or urine to have this tested.

When can I get back to normal activities?

Exercise

You should be aiming to go on regular walks daily after going home and be back to normal activity within 3 to 4 weeks. If you normally exercise more vigorously, you should avoid this and all heavy lifting for 4 to 6 weeks and be guided by the discomfort in your wound when exercising.

Driving

You need to be able to drive safely. Before you consider driving, you need to be sure you can turn the wheel or carry out an emergency stop. This is unlikely to be before 2 weeks after your surgery.

Work

You should be able to return to work within 3 to 4 weeks providing you don't require any more treatment. If your job involves heavy lifting, however, you would not be able to do this part of your job for 6 weeks.

Hobbies

Again, as long as your hobby does not involve strenuous heavy lifting you should be able to return to this soon after discharge.

Contact details

If you have concerns when you go home, you can get advice by calling Ward 4 East General on 0141 951 5450.

If you are concerned something is seriously wrong or cannot get through, you should take this leaflet to the Accident and Emergency department of the hospital where you had your surgery and they will arrange for one of the surgical team to see you.

Notes

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: 0141 951 5513

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