

Recovery at home after abdominal surgery

Gynaecology Department Patient Information Leaflet

Introduction

This booklet is for people who have had abdominal surgery. It aims to answer queries that you may have after your operation.

What can I do when I get home?

Everybody is different but you may feel tired for the first few weeks after you get home from hospital. However, although you need to rest, lying in bed during the day is not good for you because it increases your risk of developing blood clots, constipation and a chest infection.

You will need to continue to do the exercises you have been shown in hospital by the physiotherapist. If you have been given elastic stockings to help prevent blood clots, you are advised to wear them for three weeks after you get home. You can take them off to wash them, as needed.

Do not stand for too long; do as many things as you can sitting down.

Walking is an excellent exercise for you, so try to take a short walk every day. It is also quite safe for you to go up and down the stairs from your first day home.

Lifting

Avoid any heavy lifting (such as shopping bags), stretching or straining for at least six weeks after your operation, as your body needs to heal. After this time, remember to always lift with your knees bent and your back straight.

The wound

You will need to keep the wound dry for the first 48 hours after you get home. After this time, you can take any dressings off and bath or shower as normal. We recommend that you avoid perfumed products around the wound for the first few weeks.

There may be some bruising around the wound. If you get any discharge from the wound or if it becomes red or inflamed, please see your GP as this may mean you have an infection.

If you have clips or stitches that need to be removed, the nurses will let you know when this will be done.

When can I drive?

You should also make sure that you can sit in your car, fasten the seatbelt, press all the pedals and turn your head without any discomfort. You should be able to do an emergency stop.

Do not drive if you have any discomfort that may distract you.

It is very important that you check with your insurance company as to when you can drive again after surgery. Some insurance companies will not allow you to drive for a certain amount of weeks after surgery.

When can I go back to work?

You will need to take at least six weeks off work. If you need a sick note, ask the nursing staff before you leave hospital. Depending on the type of work you do, you may need more time off. Your GP will advise you about this.

When can I have sex again?

It is sensible to wait for four to six weeks or until the discomfort from the operation has gone. After this, start gently.

Leaflets cannot take the place of talks with health professionals. If there is anything you do not understand, or you are worried after your operation, contact:

The ward you were discharged from

or

Gynaecology Outpatient Team on 01384 244584 (8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/obstetrics-and-gynaecology/>

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ، ਬੋਲ ਕੇ ਰੀਕਾਰਡ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, 0800 073 0510 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ।

Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

یہ کتابچہ آپ کو بڑے حروف کی لکھائی، سمعی صورت اور دیگر زبانوں میں مہیا کیا جا سکتا ہے۔ برائے مہربانی فون نمبر 08000730510 پر رابطہ کریں۔