How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. We ask that you, and anyone visiting you, use the hand sanitiser available at the entrance to every ward before coming in to or after leaving the ward. In some situations hands may need to be washed at the sink using soap and water rather than using the hand sanitiser. Staff will let you know if this is the case.

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Going home after orthopaedic surgery: Helpful hints

Many people are surprised at the length of time it takes to get over an operation, even if it is fairly minor. Time, nature and plenty of determination is usually very effective.

Do not be afraid to ask for advice, however small your concern. A few words can stop a lot of worry.

If you require a translation or alternative format of this leaflet please call Ward 12B at Wycombe Hospital on 01494 426938

Safe & compassionate care, every time
Wound
All wounds progress through several stages of wound healing, which are quite normal. Frequent experiences can be:
• Sensations such as numbness, tingling and itching
• Inflammation and redness around the wound site
• A slight hard lumpy feeling as new tissue forms
• Slight pulling around the stitches/staples as the wound heals.

If you experience any unusual swelling, oozing from the wound, increased pain or excessive bruising then please contact the ward for advice.

• To reduce the opportunity for infection we do not disturb the wound dressing.
• The dressing is shower proof and will not be changed unless necessary.

Clips/Sutures
You may be required to make an appointment with your practice nurse to have your clips/sutures removed and your wound checked. You will be advised the date to book this and given the appropriate implement.

Mobilisation and Physiotherapy
• You will have received instruction on how to mobilise correctly and safely.
• Written or verbal guidance will be given on exercises to continue at home.
• Gradually increase the amount you do starting with a short walk 3-4 times a day
• Increase the distance over the next few weeks.
• Physiotherapy Department will contact you within 2-3 weeks if any follow up is required.
Weaning off your pain killers

- It may be necessary to take your stronger painkillers regularly for a few weeks after surgery.
- Those from the opioid family (tramadol, codeine), should be reduced thoughtfully and slowly over a period of several days to avoid withdrawal symptoms (this DOES NOT mean that you are addicted!) and unnecessary pain breakthrough.
- If you have concerns about this process please discuss with the Pain Service, Nurse or Doctor.

Rest and activity

- You may feel tired, insecure and frustrated when you go home; this is normal.
- Plan regular rest times during the day, preferably in bed as this is more relaxing.
- Let friends and family know your routines so you are not disturbed.
- Schedule your activities/exercises an hour after taking your pain killers.

Gradually increase what you can manage week by week.

You and your Stockings

To promote and maintain a healthy circulation following your operation you will need to wear your anti-embolic stockings for ........... Weeks or until your out-patient appointment.

(You should have 2 pairs in total to take home.)

Please
- Wear your stockings 24 hours a day.
- Change and wash the stockings every 2-3 days.
- Wear your stockings pulled straight with no wrinkles.
- Wear the white square at the heel.

Please DO NOT
- Boil or tumble dry the stockings.
- Roll the stockings down.
- Worry if you have extra material at the toes.

Sleeping

- Changes in routine and restricted movements can change sleeping patterns.
- Waking with discomfort in the wound and sudden movements is common.
- Taking pain killers before retiring to bed may be helpful.

Sexual Relations

There are no specific rules or timelines for this however, as a rough guide, once you feel ready to return to work then you may feel ready to resume activity. We recommend speaking to your consultant during your follow up appointment if further guidance is required.
Work and Driving
- When you return to work depends on the type of surgery and your occupation.
- Many people feel tired and have difficulty concentrating initially.
- Fitness to work certificates can be requested while on the ward.
- You are advised not to drive until your consultant has deemed it safe, which may be at your follow-up appointment.

Eating
- Appetites can be affected by surgery.
- You may feel bloated, experience indigestion and a reduced appetite.
- This usually resolves itself after a while. Smaller, more frequent meals may help.

Bowels
- Changes in diet, activity and taking some drugs can lead to irregular bowel habits.
- This usually corrects itself with time, plenty of fluids and eating a healthy diet.
- It may be beneficial to take a mild laxative until your normal pattern resumes.

Medications
- We will give you your regular medicines along with any new medications prescribed during your stay.
- All these will be explained to you on discharge including times and dosages.
- Information regarding your hospital stay and medications will be in the letter for you to give to the GP.
- It is important to take adequate pain relief so that you are able to regularly mobilise and undertake the exercises given to you.
- You are unlikely to become dependant on these medicines as you will only be taking them for a limited period of time.
- Before your medications run out please arrange to see your GP for further prescriptions.

If you have had Hip/or Knee Surgery
- There are important guidelines and plenty of extra information in your Orthopaedic Guide Books for your continued care and progress.
- We would like to phone you 7-10 days after your discharge to check your progress and complete a short questionnaire to provide some feedback regarding your care while in hospital.