

NHS
Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Advice following a general anaesthetic

Adult Day Surgery Unit

This leaflet is for the guidance of patients and relatives/friends of patients who have undergone day surgery under a general anaesthetic at the Adult Day Surgery Unit in the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Please read it before you go home so that you can have any of your questions answered before you leave. If there is anything you do not understand or if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to discuss them with your nurse.

After a general anaesthetic

The anaesthetic drug remains in your body for up to 24 hours after your operation and over this period you may feel tired and drowsy. You may remain drowsy for longer if you are taking strong painkillers. It is essential that at this time you heed the following advice:

- Do not drive a car, or any other vehicles, including bicycles.
- Do not operate machinery or appliances such as cookers and kettles.
- Go straight home and rest quietly for the remainder of the day.
- Have a responsible adult to look after you for at least 24 hours following your discharge from the Unit.
- Drink plenty of fluids and eat a light diet, avoiding alcohol.
- Do not lock the bathroom or toilet door. Do not make yourself inaccessible to the person looking after you.
- You are advised to have a supply of Paracetamol and/or Ibuprofen at home. If you require stronger tablets, these will be provided before leaving the Unit.

- Do not sign important documents or make major decisions for 24 hours after the anaesthetic.
- If you have a problem requiring medical attention after your return home, please contact your GP.

Advice for relatives/friends

Due to the anaesthetic and painkilling drugs remaining in the body for 24 hours, there is a risk that the patient may feel weak and even faint. It is very common to feel faint after a general anaesthetic. Therefore, you should know what to do if this happens. Please carefully read the following instructions:

- If the patient feels weak or faints, lie them down and place a cushion under their feet to elevate their legs.
- Provide a source of fresh air, loosen their clothes and make sure an adult is with them until they recover. If they are not feeling sick, they should drink plenty of water.

In the event of the patient continuing to feel faint, please contact your GP for further advice.

During the first 24 hours following your discharge

If you have any further concerns about your surgery, please telephone the ADSU: 0118 322 7622.

Opening hours are 7.30am to 10.00pm Monday-Friday. If you need help/advice outside these hours, please telephone the Royal Berkshire Hospital switchboard on 0118 322 5111 and ask for the on-call surgery doctor. Please note that this should be for emergencies only.

After 24 hours, please seek advice from your GP or call NHS 111.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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Next review due: November 2028