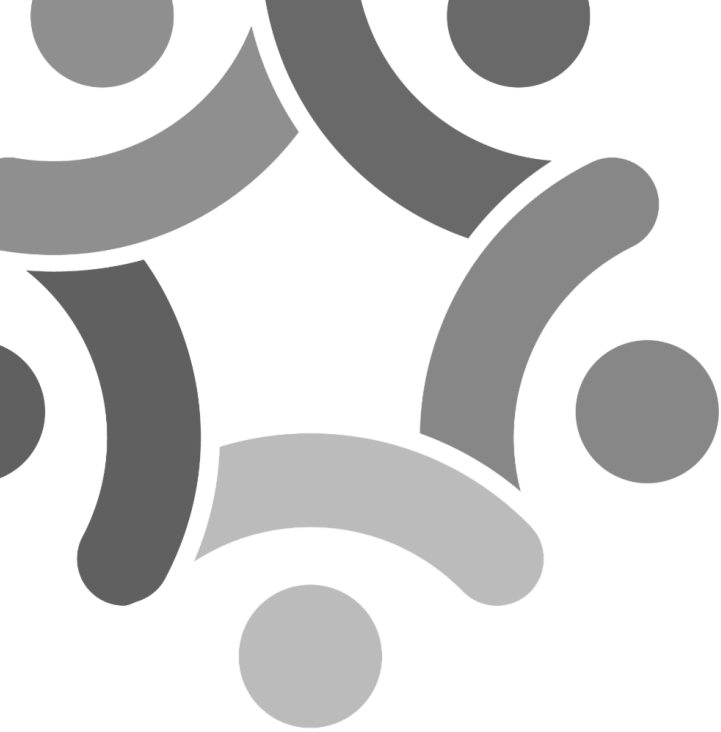


NHS
Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Advice following a general anaesthetic

Information for patients, relatives and carers

This leaflet gives you advice and information following treatment that required a general anaesthetic (i.e. you were asleep). Please read it before you go home so that you can have any of your questions answered before you leave. Feel free to discuss any questions or concerns with your nurse.

Important advice

Following a general anaesthetic, the anaesthetic drugs remain in your body for up to 48 hours before gradually wearing off. During this time, you are under the influence of these drugs and may experience a number of side effects.

To aid your recovery and to ensure you stay safe, we strongly advise you to take the following precautions for at least 48 hours following your surgery.

- Regardless of the type of surgery you have had, you will not be fit to work during these 48 hours, so you need to take time off.
- You must arrange for someone (a responsible adult) to collect you and take you home from hospital.
- It is important that you go home and rest with light to moderate activity if you feel like it. You may not need to go to bed but you should rest for the first 24 hours and avoid strenuous activity.
- We recommend that you do not operate any machinery, drive a vehicle, cook or take part in any activity that requires balance for the first 48 hours after surgery.
- You may experience light-headedness, dizziness or abnormal sleepiness so you should not be alone or be responsible for young children or the elderly for at least 24 hours after the anaesthetic.

- We recommend that you do not make any important decisions or sign any important documents during this period as your judgement may be impaired and you may be forgetful.
- Alcohol increases the effect of anaesthesia and sedation so you are advised not to drink alcohol for 48 hours following surgery.
- Make sure you are accessible and don’t lock the bathroom or toilet door until you are fully recovered.
- Some anaesthetic drugs and painkillers may produce nausea and vomiting in some people. If nausea becomes a problem once you are at home, contact your GP for advice.

Advice for relative / friends looking after you

Due to the anaesthetic drug remaining in the body for 48 hours, there is a risk that the patient may feel weak or even faint. It is very common to feel faint after a general anaesthetic so it is important that you know what to do if this happens.

- If the patient feels weak or faints, lie them down and place a cushion under their feet to elevate their legs.
- Make sure there is fresh air and loosen the patient’s clothes.
- If they are not feeling sick, they should drink plenty of water.
- Make sure an adult stays with the patient until they are fully recovered.

If the patient continues to feel faint, contact their GP for further advice.

Contact us

If you have any concerns or questions following your procedure, please telephone the ENT Department on 01865 903274; or Greenlands Ward (out of hours) on 0118 322 7172/8101.

For appointment queries, contact the Clinical Admin Team (CAT 1) Tel: 0118 322 7139 or email: rbb-tr.CAT1@nhs.net

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

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

RBFT Greenlands Ward
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