



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Your admission to the General Surgical Department

(Hunter & Lister Wards /
Chesterman Admission
Suite)

Level 3, South Block

Useful information for patients

This booklet contains useful information and advice for patients coming in for planned general surgery. If you have any queries or concerns, please speak to a member of staff.

Contacting us

If there is any change in your health between your pre-operative assessment appointment and the date of your surgery, or if you are unsure whether to take any regular medication before you are admitted, please contact the pre-operative assessment department on 0118 322 6546 to discuss this with a nurse.

Please contact the Clinical Admin Team (CAT3) on 0118 322 1883:

- There is any change to your personal details (address, telephone number, change of GP);
- You decide not to undergo your planned surgery;
- You go for your surgery elsewhere;
- You wish to change the date of your surgery.

Blood tests and medication

- You will be given a blood test request form at pre-op assessment. Please remember to take this form with you and arrange for your blood test to be done within 1 week of your admission date.
- You can have your blood test done at the Pathology Department in the Royal Berkshire Hospital
- On discharge the Trust no longer provides basic pain relief medicines, such as Paracetamol or Ibuprofen for patients to take

home. Please ensure that you have a supply of these painkillers at home to take following your discharge, if stronger pain relief is required, then it will be provided.

- You will also need to bring in any medicines that you take regularly, in the original packaging. These will be stored in a lockable cupboard at your bedside. Any medicines remaining will be given back to you on discharge.

The day before your operation

Some general surgery patients are asked to contact Hunter & Lister Ward on 0118 322 7535, the day before they are due to come in. You will be told if you need to phone in the letter from the Clinical Admin Team.

What to bring with you

Please refer to the folder 'Quick guide to coming into hospital for surgery' for a detailed list of recommended clothing, toiletries and other personal items to bring into hospital with you. We ask that you have a bath or shower before your admission, and wear loose-fitting clothes and flat, comfortable shoes.

Personal property:

Please leave all valuable items at home, i.e. large sums of money, expensive jewellery etc. The Trust is not liable and does not take responsibility for damage to, loss or theft of your private property.

About the General Surgical Unit

- The Chesterman Admission Suite and Hunter and Lister Wards make up the General Surgical Unit which is for patients undergoing various types of general surgery. Chesterman has comfortable

seating and a television. Patients are transferred to theatre for their operation and then admitted to either Hunter or Lister Ward.

- The staff/your anaesthetist on the Admission Suite will give you a provisional time for your operation and inform you if this changes due to unforeseen circumstances. Your operation will be at some point during the day. This can sometimes be a lengthy wait, so please bring something to occupy your time.
- All patients' privacy must be respected and space in the Chesterman Admission Suite is very limited. For this reason visitors/escorts are requested to leave once a patient is settled.
- Hunter Ward has a total of 24 beds: There are four bays and two side rooms.
- Lister Ward has three side rooms.
- Nurses work with other healthcare professionals on the unit as a team aiming to provide a high standard of patient care. We all hope to make your stay with us as pleasant as possible.
- Please speak to staff if you have any concerns. If you feel that you cannot speak to staff on your ward, then please follow the advice in the Trust's 'Quick guide to coming into hospital for surgery' folder; or ask to meet with a Patient Relations representative.
- Flowers are not allowed on the unit.
- Mobile phones may be used but please respect the privacy and confidentiality of others. On occasion, you may be asked to switch your phone off by a member of staff. Silent ring tones such as 'vibration mode' should be used and calls restricted to between 7am and 9pm. The camera facility on your mobile phone is not to be used at any time to protect patient confidentiality.
- Free Wifi is available for patients and visitors. Connect using the RBFT_GUEST network.

Admission times

For directions please refer to the map provided within your pre-operative assessment information pack.

***For 7.00am - 7.30am admission:**

Please remember, you must not have anything to eat after 2.30am.

You should continue drinking clear fluids until 6.30am.

Please plan your travel into hospital so that you arrive at the Chesterman Admission Suite, Level 3, South Block no later than 7am.

The theatre list will start at 8.30am.

***For afternoon admission:**

Please remember, you must not have anything to eat or drink after 7.30am on the day of your admission. You should continue drinking clear fluids until 11.30am.

Please plan your travel into hospital so that you arrive at the Chesterman Admission Suite, Level 3 South Block no later than 11am.

The afternoon theatre list will start at 1.30pm.

***Evening admissions to Hunter & Lister Ward:**

Only for patients needing pre-operative treatments or those with serious or disabling medical conditions.

Hunter and Lister Ward, Level 3 South Block.

Please telephone Hunter Ward at 10am on the day you are to be admitted to confirm that a bed is available and to confirm the time you are expected to report for your admission.

**(Pre-operative assessment nurse to delete as appropriate)*

Clear fluids

Clear fluids include: water, black tea and black coffee, well diluted squash (but not fruit juice) – you should be able to read newsprint through it.

Please do not suck sweets or chew gum on the day of your operation.

Failure to follow these instructions will cause a delay in your surgery or your surgery being cancelled.

Getting ready for your operation

A member of the nursing staff will ask you a few routine questions and record your blood pressure, temperature and any other observations that may be needed. Please tell the nurse if you have any special requirements or anxieties about your operation.

You will then be seen by the surgeon or a member of their team, who will discuss the proposed operation with you, including the risks and benefits and ask you to sign a consent form. The anaesthetist who will be looking after you during your operation will also visit you to discuss your anaesthetic and pain control.

Recovering after your operation

Once your surgery is complete you will be taken to the recovery room where you will be looked after by a recovery room nurse.

You may be given oxygen to breathe and the nurse will make regular recordings of your blood pressure and oxygen levels. The nurse will also ask you about pain and monitor your wound (if applicable).

When the nurse is satisfied with your progress he/she will report information about the operation, anaesthetic and observations to a nurse from your ward. You will then be transferred to a bed or trolley and taken back to your ward by a porter, accompanied by a nurse from your ward. When you are back on the ward, nursing staff will

continue to monitor your progress. If you feel well enough, you will be offered fluids and light foods.

You may also be seen by other healthcare staff, such as physiotherapists, depending on your operation. You will not normally see the surgeon on the same day as your operation unless he/she has a particular reason to visit you.

Length of stay

A patient's length of stay will depend on the type of surgery, and an individual's medical condition. This will be discussed with you at your pre-operative assessment and updated during your admission. We will help you to be as independent as physically possible during your stay.

Discharge home

- On the day of discharge we may arrange for you to wait in the Discharge Lounge for your medications and transport home.
- It is important that you make transport arrangements to take you home on discharge as it may not be possible to drive yourself home, or to travel on your own on public transport. The care team will continue to assess your progress until they are assured of your fitness to go home. They will discuss discharge information with you; please tell them if you have any concerns or questions.
- Please be aware that there can be a considerable delay between being told you can leave hospital and the time that your medications and discharge letter are ready for you. Please be patient and do not call for transport home until your nurse advises it. We will do all that is possible to speed up your discharge process.
- A letter explaining your care will be emailed to your GP. If for any reason this is not possible, the letter will be sent by post. If you would like to have a copy of this letter please ask your ward nurse on the day of your discharge.

- Any new medication which has been prescribed for you will be given along with verbal instructions on how to take it. Please ask if you would like written instructions. Any remaining medication that you brought in will be returned.
- Your nurse will give you information and advice regarding follow-up appointments, removal of stitches, care of wounds etc.
- If your district nurse is required to continue your care at home, you will be asked to convey a letter, and possibly dressings/equipment to the nurse.

Returning to work

This depends on the type of operation you have had and what your job involves, your doctor can advise you.

If you need a medical certificate for your employer, please ask your ward nurse for one early in your stay to help to ensure that it is ready for you on discharge.

During the first 24 hours following your discharge

If you have any concerns about your surgery, please telephone your ward: Tel: Hunter Ward 0118 322 7535 or Lister Ward 0118 322 7539.

After 24 hours, please seek advice from your GP.

Visit our website: www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

Pre-Operative Assessment: January 2019

Review due: January 2021