

After your operation

Staying out of bed and walking

When you wake up from your operation it is important that you start your deep breathing exercises:

- hold a towel over your abdomen with your arms to give support
- bring your knees up slightly and lower your shoulders
- breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth slowly
- do this three times and then 'huff' with your mouth as if cleaning spectacles
- repeat the exercise twice
- you should do this every hour until you settle for the night.

These should reduce the risk of developing a chest infection.

Every 10 minutes or so, point your toes up and down and circle your feet at the ankle. This will reduce the risk of clots in your legs.

The ward staff will help you get out of bed about six hours after your operation:

- you may at first find it easier to roll onto your side first, and drop your legs over the side of the bed
- you will spend two hours out of bed on the day of surgery
- you will spend at least eight hours out of bed the day after your operation
- you will be encouraged to walk about 60 metres 4-6 times a day, starting the day after surgery
- by being out of bed in an upright position and by walking regularly, lung function is improved and there is less chance of a chest infection.

Pain control

It is important that your pain is well controlled so that you can walk about, breathe deeply, eat and drink, feel relaxed and sleep well.

You may have an injection in your back (epidural) which allows a continuous supply of the pain relieving medicine to be given. The doctors will also prescribe other pain relieving medicines, which work in different ways. If you have these regularly (three to four times a day), you should feel comfortable.

If you are uncomfortable please tell the staff immediately and they will help you. The epidural is usually removed two days after your operation but you will continue with other pain-relieving medicines.

The pain nurses will see you after surgery.

Sickness

Sometimes after an operation some people feel sick or are sick. This is usually caused by the anaesthetic or drugs used. You will be given medication during your operation to reduce the chance of this happening. If you feel sick please tell the staff immediately. It is important to relieve the sickness quickly so that you feel able to eat and drink normally which will aid your recovery.

Tubes and drips

During your operation a catheter will be placed in your bladder. This will allow us to check that your kidneys are working well and making urine. The catheter will be removed as soon as possible, usually the morning after your operation

You will have a drip (intravenous infusion or I/VI) put in your arm during your operation to make sure you get enough fluid.

This is usually removed the day after your surgery

You may be given extra oxygen to breathe after your operation until you are up and about.

Monitoring

Many different things will be monitored during your recovery, including:

- fluids in
- fluids out
- food eaten
- pain assessment
- time out of bed
- walks taken
- first bowel action.

Please remember to tell us about everything you eat and drink and what you pass. You will be encouraged to write some of this information on the charts yourself.

Contact numbers

Colorectal Nurses

Tel: 01206 742356 Monday-Friday (this may be an answermachine but your message will be picked up daily) or 01206 747474 and ask switchboard to bleep 944

Laparoscopic Nurse Practitioner

Monday to Thursday 8am-6pm

Tel: 07768145118

Outside of these hours please phone the hospital switchboard 01206 747474 and ask for the surgical on-call registrar.

Mersea Ward

Tel: 01206 746252.

Introduction

This leaflet should increase your understanding of the programme and how you can play an active part in your own recovery. If there is anything you are not sure about, please ask.

Eating and drinking

At the pre-admission clinic you will be given some nourishing drinks to take home. These are called Fresubin energy:

- two days before your operation you need to have 3 – 4 of the drinks
- on the day before your operation you should have a further 3 – 4 drinks
- you may eat up to six hours before your operation unless told otherwise, and may drink clear fluid up until two hours before surgery
- a few hours after surgery you will be able to drink and, if you wish, eat. It is important that you eat and drink soon after your operation. The nurses and doctors will encourage you
- it is important that you drink four nourishing drinks each day after surgery because your body needs nourishment to help heal your wounds, reduce the risk of infection and help your recovery generally
- you also need to have other drinks.

Preparing for theatre

You will also be given some other medicines at the pre-admission clinic. They may include:

- senna tablets - a gentle laxative to help clear your bowel
- Infacol - a liquid to help prepare your bowel for surgery
- Clexane injection - a small injection that helps to thin your blood and reduce the risk of blood clots
- Maxijul - a powder that is dissolved in water to help boost your calorie intake before your operation.

Full details of these will be provided at the clinic.

Verifying your identity

When you attend hospital you will be asked to confirm your first and last name, date of birth, postcode and NHS number if you know it, and to let us know if you have any allergies.

Comments, compliments or complaints about your care

Please call PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) on freephone 0800 783 7328, pick up a leaflet or visit www.colchesterhospital.nhs.uk

Your views

If you or a family member has recently been in Colchester General Hospital, you can tell us about your experience by searching for 'Colchester' on the NHS Choices website www.nhs.uk, by writing to the address on the front of this leaflet, by emailing your comments to info@colchesterhospital.nhs.uk or by filling in a questionnaire at the hospital telling us if you would recommend our service to a friend or family member.

Enhanced Recovery Programme

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Introduction

Please ask if you
require this leaflet in
an alternative format

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Kind
Caring
Welcoming

Involving
Communication
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Be the difference

at our
best.