



**Southport and  
Ormskirk Hospital**  
NHS Trust

# **PATIENT INFORMATION**

## **Pre-Operative Information**

**Please let the pre-operative assessment team know as soon as possible if:**

You develop a bad cough, cold, chest infection, fever, urinary infection, diarrhoea, a skin infection or a broken sore area of skin and you have been given a date for your operation.

You are referred to any other consultant or your GP has started any investigations regarding your health whether or not you have a date for your operation.

### **Pre-Operative Assessment Clinic contact details**

Please contact this department if you have any concerns regarding your admission.

Southport Team 01704 704849

Ormskirk Team 01695 656475

It is important you follow the advice given by your pre-operative practitioner/nurse carefully as your surgery may be cancelled if you do not.

### **Confirming your Admission**

When you receive a letter regarding your admission, please confirm your acceptance by contacting the waiting list office on the number on the letter.

**If you cannot attend for any reason, or no longer wish to have your operation, please let the waiting list office know as early as possible on 01695 656858 as another patient may be able to benefit from this appointment.**

Welcome to Southport and Ormskirk NHS Hospitals Trust.  
We aim to make your hospital experience as comfortable as possible from your pre-operative assessment until your discharge home.

Name of pre-operative practitioner/nurse:

Your proposed operation:

Name of your consultant:

Date of admission:

Length of stay:

### **Pre-Operative Information**

Thank you for attending your pre-operative assessment today. Preparing for your planned surgery before coming into hospital avoids delays on the day of your admission and reduces the risk of cancellation. The results of any tests and investigations completed today will be reviewed by the pre-operative staff and your pre-operative practitioner/nurse will be in touch if any further tests or investigations are required.

As part of your pre-operative assessment the following will have been discussed:

### **Medication**

It is important you take all your routine medication with a small sip of water and use any inhalers as normal on the day of your operation.

It may be necessary to stop certain medication on the day of, or for several days before your operation.

**Please stop taking the following medication:**

--

Please bring all your medication/inhalers with you on the day of your admission; in their original packaging with a prescription list (your GP should be able to provide a copy). Please bring enough medication to last you the duration of your stay.

**Please purchase a supply of painkillers prior to your admission, to be used on your discharge.** Example, Paracetamol and Ibuprofen can be effectively taken together to help control your pain.

If you have any questions or need further advice, please contact the Pre-Op Team.

## **Diet**

Please ensure you eat a well-balanced diet prior to your surgery. Being overweight will increase the risk of having an anaesthetic, reducing your weight will help to reduce these risks.

If you live in Sefton help can be obtained from Healthy Sefton 0300 100 1000 or visit their website at

## **Fasting**

Admission and fasting instructions will be sent to you when your date for surgery is confirmed. Please do not have any of the following after your fasting time: **food, fluids, sweets, chewing gum, cigarettes**. You may drink clear still water until 6am on the day of your admission.

## **Personal Hygiene**

Please have a bath or a shower on the morning of your operation. It is important that the area of your body that is to be operated on is clean and your skin is intact.

Please do not shave your operation area as the operation may have to be postponed if the skin around the operation site is damaged. Do not use talc, deodorant, hair products, make-up, perfumes, aftershave or body lotion. Please remove nail varnish, false nails and jewellery when you come in for your operation. You may keep your wedding ring on unless you are having surgery to that hand or arm.

## **Smoking**

Smoking increases the risk of complications during and after surgery. It increases the risk of the anaesthetic and delays wound healing. To help reduce these risks you need to have as many smoke free days as possible prior to surgery.

Advice and support is available from the following:

SUPPORT  
For Sefton residents

0300 100 1000

STOP SMOKING SERVICE  
For West Lancs residents

0800 328 6297

National NHS helpline Freephone 0800 1690 169  
or visit [www.Giveupsmoking.co.uk](http://www.Giveupsmoking.co.uk)

A member of the preoperative assessment team can refer you to the Stop smoking service or provide details of drop-in clinics in the Sefton and West Lancs areas.

## **Alcohol**

Men should not regularly drink more than 3 to 4 units of alcohol per day.

Women should not regularly drink more than 2 to 3 units per day.

Regularly means drinking every day or most days of the week.

You should also take a break for 48 hours after drinking heavily to let your body recover. If you are concerned about your drinking habits you can be referred to HALT, the hospital alcohol liaison team for advice.

## **PRE-OPERATIVE TESTS**

Examples of the tests you might be offered are described below:

**Full blood count** – a blood sample is taken to count different types of blood cells.

**Kidney function test** – a blood test that checks the salts in

the blood and how well the kidneys are working.

**Blood clotting test** – also called a “haemostasis” test, a blood sample is tested to see how well the blood clots.

**Blood glucose** – a blood glucose test measures the amount of glucose (sugar) in a blood sample. This test is used to check for previously unknown diabetes, which is quite rare. It may be done if you are going to have major surgery.

**HbA1c (blood sugar) test** – a blood sample is tested to give information about the long-term control of blood sugar.

**Group and Save (or hold)** – anticipating that there may be a requirement for blood but not routinely for this procedure, the patient’s blood type is identified and held, pending a possible (later) request for units of blood or blood products.

**Urine dipstick test** – a urine sample is tested for urinary tract infections or to check kidney function.

**Pregnancy test** – a urine sample is tested to see if a woman is pregnant.

**Electrocardiography (ECG)** – a test that uses stickers placed on your skin to produce a trace showing how well the heart is working.

**Echocardiography (“echo”)** – this uses an ultrasound scan to check how well the heart is working.

**Lung function tests** – tests to check how well the lungs are working, for example, a test called spirometry measures how well you can breathe in and out.

**Sickle cell test** – a blood sample is tested for a condition called sickle cell anaemia. (Sickle cell disease is the name for a group of inherited conditions that affect the red blood cells. In the UK it is particularly common in people with an African or Caribbean family background).

**MRSA Screening** – Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) is a bacteria. The bacteria can live in many people’s skin without causing any harm, but it causes

infection once it enters the body, particularly in people with poor health. This test is done to detect the presence of these bacteria on your body.

## **Preparing for your discharge home**

When you are discharged home following surgery please ensure:

You have arranged for a responsible adult to collect you and stay with you for the first 24 hours following a general anaesthetic (GA) if you are a day patient.

You do not drive a car, operate machinery or drink alcohol for 48 hours following a general anaesthetic.

You have access to a telephone in case of emergency following your discharge.

## **MRSA**

You have been screened for Meticillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) today. If you are admitted to any hospital or come into contact with someone that has MRSA please contact the Preoperative assessment team. If the test is positive a member of the pre-op team will contact you and arrange treatment to minimise the risk from the organism. This is normally an antibacterial skin wash and a nasal ointment. A positive result does not necessarily mean that your surgery will be delayed and the risks will be assessed in individual cases.

## **What to bring into hospital with you**

- Your admission letter



- National Insurance number
- Any treatment cards
- Your regular medication in the original packaging. A list of these with the correct dosages.
- Next of kin contact details and contact number
- If you are admitted as a day patient please bring a dressing gown and slippers and wear some comfortable loose clothing that will fit easily over any bandages or dressings after your surgery.
- If you are admitted as an inpatient in addition to your dressing gown and slippers, please bring some clean night clothes and underwear. You will also need some toiletries. As storage is limited if relatives are visiting please ask them to take any washing home and bring in clean clothes as needed during your stay.

### **What will happen?**

Please arrive with only one relative, friend or carer. Due to limited space, infection control and to respect the privacy and dignity of all our patients your relative or friend may not be able to accompany you to your bed or may only be able to stay for a short time.

The nursing staff will take some details and complete your admission paperwork.

An identification bracelet will be applied. A theatre checklist will also be completed.

You will have a blood pressure check and it may also be necessary to repeat some blood tests if required.

The anaesthetist will see you before surgery to discuss your

anaesthetic.

Your surgeon will see you to discuss your surgery and you will sign your consent form if this has not already been signed in clinic. If you have already signed your consent form they will be able to answer any questions you may have and will check you are happy to proceed with your surgery.

You will be asked to change into a theatre gown to be ready to go to theatre. Your clothes can be placed in your bag.

A member of staff will accompany you to the theatre reception. You may be taken by bed, wheelchair or may walk depending on your mobility.

A member of the theatre staff will ask you to confirm your details and another part of the theatre checklist will be completed.

You may be transferred onto a trolley before going into the anaesthetic room.

### **Following surgery**

After your surgery you will be taken to the recovery unit. Visitors are not usually permitted within the recovery unit as it is located within the theatre complex and patients are regaining consciousness from their surgery. Carers for patients with special needs are sometimes present once the patient is awake to prevent distress and parents will sometimes be called to accompany children back to the ward.

We know that relatives and friends will be concerned about

you, but it would help us if only one person telephones the hospital and then passes the information onto others. Please remind relatives that information can only be given with your consent.

Your mobility may be restricted after surgery; your surgeon will advise you when it will be safe to resume work and start to drive. Driving following anaesthetic and surgery may invalidate your motor insurance please check with your insurer prior to resuming driving.

### **On discharge**

Please be aware that the hospital has a multi-disciplinary discharge policy. This means that you may not be seen by your consultant before you are discharged home.

If you require assistance with shopping or light household tasks for a limited time following your discharge from hospital help may be available from the following charities:

AGE concern

Chorley and West Lancashire

Liverpool and Sefton

0300 303 1234

01704 542993

SSAFA

For armed forces staff or veterans 0845 241 7141

If you have more complex needs or require help with personal care please inform the pre-operative team or ward staff on admission so a formal referral to social services can be made.

## **Visiting**

Visiting times vary for each ward. Please ask for current details on your admission.

Large numbers of visitors may be tiring and you will need to rest.

Visitors may be asked to leave if treatments are being carried out.

**Visitors must not visit if they have had diarrhoea or vomiting within the past 48 hours.**

**Visiting is also not advised if you are suffering from a heavy cold or any other infectious condition.**

## **Car Parking**

Limited parking is available on both sites. The fee is based on the length of stay but the first 20 minutes are free. The scale of charges is posted at the entrance to our car parks and at the pay station.

Weekly passes are available from the general office (or the porters lodge after hours) and they will advise you of the current charges. A £10 deposit is also required for the pass.

## **Smoking and alcohol policy**

Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust is smoke free. This includes both the buildings and all the grounds. By being smoke free we are helping to protect the health of our patients, visitors and staff as well as making the hospital a more pleasant environment.

There is a stop smoking nurse in the hospital to help you during your stay and nicotine replacement is available on prescription. If you would like to be seen please ask staff on arrival in hospital.

Alcohol is forbidden on hospital premises. Consumption may also interfere with your treatment.

### **Fire precautions**

If you see anything that may be a fire hazard, please inform a member of staff immediately. In the unlikely event of a fire, hospital staffs are trained to deal with it. Fire alarm testing takes place every Wednesday.

### **Laundry**

We do not have facilities for patients' personal laundry and would appreciate if you could make arrangements for a relative or friend to do your laundry for you. If this is difficult, please let the nursing staff know.

### **Meal times**

A menu is provided daily for you to choose from. And meals are served at the following times:

Breakfast	7.30 am to 8.00 am
Lunch	Noon to 1.00 pm
Evening Meal	5.00pm to 5.45pm

We make provision for those who, for religious or other reasons follow a special diet. Please discuss your

requirements with the nursing staff or ward clerk on admission.

### **Bedside pay TV, phone and internet**

This is available on a terminal by your bedside. For further information and to register, please call 0845 414 0414.

### **Pay phones**

Pay phones are available in the main entrance of the hospitals. There is a free phone to a local taxi company located in the main reception areas of both hospitals.

### **Mobile phones**

Mobile phones and two-way radios must be switched off in or near medical treatment areas as they may interfere with equipment used in caring for patients. They may however, be used in the following areas:

- Grounds and gardens
- Main hospital streets
- Restaurants and coffee shops
- General office areas

If you bring a mobile into hospital with you, and it is not handed over for safekeeping, we cannot accept responsibility for it.

### **In the event of your operation being cancelled**

The trust endeavours not to cancel on the day of your surgery. Should this be necessary due to unforeseen problems, you will be:

- Given a new date by the admissions department
- Offered refreshments
- Your friend or relative will be contacted to come and collect you

### **Travel after surgery**

It is recommended patients should not travel by air for up to three months following major surgery and for 4 to 6 weeks after non-major surgery. If you are planning a holiday following any surgery, you must bring this to the attention of your surgeon.

### **Before you leave**

We value your input to assist us in monitoring and improving the services in your hospitals. To help us achieve this, we may ask you to take a few minutes to complete a survey on a hand held computer. Staff will be available to help you with this if needed.

### **The Surgical Wound**

A surgical wound is the cut made into the skin by the surgeon during an operation. At the end of the operation, the cut is stitched to allow the skin edges to come together and heal. Sometimes metal clips or staples are used to keep the skin edges together. The skin edges usually form a seal within a day or two of the operation. The time this takes varies from person to person and from operation to operation.

## **Dressings**

Not all surgical wounds need dressings. The purpose of a dressing is to absorb any leakage from the wound, provide ideal conditions for healing, protect the area until the wound is healed and to prevent stitches or clips catching on clothing.

## **Stitches, clips and staples**

Stitches are also known as sutures. Metal clips or staples are other methods used to close surgical wound.

Adhesive dressings (glue), steri-strips or tapes may also be used. Most types of stitches and clips or staples have to be removed by a nurse or doctor, but some stitches don't need to be removed because they dissolve. If you are told you need to have stitches removed, the nurses should arrange for your GP or the practice nurse to do this.

Stitches, clips and staples are usually removed between 5 and 21 days after treatment, depending on the type of operation you have had.

Paper stitches (known as 'Steristrips') can be removed in 7 days by gentle pulling. If in any doubt consult your GP or practice nurse.

Medical glue does not need to be removed. It will disappear as the wound heals.

After removal of sutures and clips small scabs may form. These should be left until they fall off naturally.



## **Problems with wound healing**

A lot of wounds heal without any problems. However, the most common complication after surgery is wound infection. This means that germs have started to grow in the wound and this usually delays normal wound healing.

Wound infections are usually treated by dressing the wound regularly and maybe with a course of antibiotics as well. Sometimes further surgery may be needed. Some people are more likely to develop wound infections than others and the doctors will discuss this with you. Those at higher risk include people who smoke, have diabetes, have a condition or treatment that affects their immune system, such as leukaemia or chemotherapy, have a major operation, such as bowel surgery, where diet is not giving enough nutrients for wound healing.

Doctors and nurses will do everything that they can to prevent your wound from becoming infected while you are in hospital, but it is important that you know how to tell if you are developing an infection after you go home.

If a wound becomes infected, it may become more painful, look red or swollen, weep or leak some blood- like liquid, pus or blood and may have an unpleasant smell.

If you develop a high temperature, notice any of the signs mentioned above, or have any concerns about your wound, then contact your GP, District Nurse or Practice Nurse, or the hospital. Wound infections can be treated successfully if they are caught early.

## **Changing the dressing**

The original dressing can be left in place for up to 2 days (or as advised by the nurse/doctor), provided it is not oozing. The wound must be kept dry for 2 days. If the dressing becomes wet from blood or any other liquid, it must be changed.

Before you remove and change the dressing wash your hands with soap and water, carefully take the dirty dressing off and do not touch the healing wound with your fingers.

If the wound is healing it can be left without a dressing. Some people prefer to have a dressing to cover the wound for protection, especially when clothing can rub against it. We may give you a supply of replacement dressings to use at home. When applying, take care not to touch the inside of the dressing so that it remains clean. There is no need for antiseptic cream under the dressing.

Once healed, the redness of a scar may take up to six months to heal.

## **Taking care of stitches**

Dissolving stitches usually disappear in 7-10 days. Other stitches need to be removed after 5 to 21 days, depending on the operation. The doctor/nurse will tell you on the day of discharge when to have the stitches removed. You will be given a letter for your practice nurse about removing the stitches.

You may see nylon threads (the ends of the stitches) poking out of the healing scar. Please do not pull on these. If the loose ends are catching on clothes, please telephone the

ward for advice. If you are worried about the stitches, always seek advice from your GP. Otherwise wait for the stitches to be removed or for them to fall off or dissolve. If stitches continue to cause you pain or discomfort, contact the ward for advice.

## **Bathing and showering**

You are normally advised to wait 24 hours before showering but this depends on the operation you had. The nurses will give you advice on this.

Some general points about your wound:

- Showering is preferable to bathing.
- Only take a bath if you are sure you can keep the wound dry. Soaking the wound might soften the scar tissue and re-open the wound.
- Some waterproof dressing can be left in place whilst you take a bath or shower. Other dressings may need to be removed before having a bath or shower.
- Do not put any soap, shower gel, body lotion, talcum powder or other bathing products directly onto the healing wound.
- Do not worry if you splash the wound but do not rub the wound area as this will cause pain and might delay the healing process.
- Pat the wound gently with a clean towel after bathing or showering.
- If the surgery was performed on your face, please do not wear make-up over the scar until it has fully healed.

If you have any concerns about your wound or the dressing, you should contact your GP or practice nurse

## **Data Protection**

All information collected about you is kept in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

**Everyone working for the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential.**

**PRE-OP GOALS**

**During your contact with us, it is important that you are happy with your care and treatment. Please speak to a member of staff and/or the ward/department Sister/Charge Nurse if you have questions or concerns.**

## **MATRON**

A Matron is also available during the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. During these periods, ward/department staff can contact Matron to arrange to meet with you. Out of hours, a Senior Nurse can be contacted via the ward/department to deal with any concerns you may have.

## **INFECTION CONTROL REQUEST**

Preventing infections is a crucial part of our patients' care. To ensure that our standards remain high our staff have regular infection prevention and control training and their practice is monitored in the workplace. We ask patients and visitors to assist us in preventing infections by cleaning their hands at regular intervals and informing staff of areas within the hospital that appear soiled.

As a patient there may be times that you are unsure whether a staff member has cleaned their hands; if in doubt please ask the staff member and they will be only too happy to put your mind at ease by cleaning their hands so that you can see them.

## **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

### **ANY CONDITION SPECIFIC DANGER SIGNALS TO LOOK OUT FOR:**

### **CONTACT INFORMATION IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR CONDITION**

- Your own GP

### **OTHER USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS/CONTACTS:**

NHS 111

Stop Smoking Helpline (Sefton) – 0300 100 1000

Stop Smoking Helpline (West Lancashire) – 0800 328 6297

**Please call 01704 704714 if you need  
this leaflet in an alternative format**

**Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust**

Ormskirk & District General Hospital  
Wigan Road, Ormskirk, L39 2AZ

Tel: (01695) 577111

Southport & Formby District General Hospital  
Town Lane, Kew, Southport, PR8 6PN

Tel: (01704) 547471

**FOR APPOINTMENTS**

Telephone (01695) 656680

Email [soh-tr.appointments@nhs.net](mailto:soh-tr.appointments@nhs.net)

Please remember to complete the **attached** *Friends and Family Test*.

Alternatively, you can complete the *Friends and Family Test* on-line by going to:

southportandormskirk.nhs.uk/FFT

**Thank you**

Author: Laura Robinson

Ref: 14/47

Version: 2

Reviewed: December 2021

Next Review: December 2024