

Service:  
Movement Disorders

# Discharge from Hospital following Deep Brain Stimulation Surgery



This leaflet gives you information and advice for when you go home. Though you will have had the opportunity to ask questions, whilst in hospital, we wish to support you once you are at home and address any concerns you might have.

You must never feel isolated, and should not hesitate to contact your Movement Disorder Nurse Specialist to discuss any issues.

### **What can I expect when I first go home?**

You may continue to feel tired for four to six weeks while your body is recovering from your recent surgery. It is important that you remain relatively active and work towards re-establishing your normal routine, but that you continue to rest periodically.

You should not drive for four to six weeks.

It is important to remain hydrated and that you have regular bowel and bladder movements. You should continue with your pre-operative medication regime until your stimulator activation visit, unless otherwise directed.

It is important that you do neck exercises, several times a day, for approximately six weeks after the surgery to prevent the leads running down your neck, becoming too tight. Rotate your neck from side-to-side, forwards and backwards and move your ear towards each shoulder.

Some individuals may temporarily experience symptoms as a result of mild swelling in the brain. Such symptoms can include:

- Blurred vision.
- Slurred speech.
- Falls or loss of balance which is not normal for you.
- Increased involuntary movements (dyskinesia).

Please contact the Movement Disorder Nurse Specialists at Southmead or your GP out of hours if these symptoms are a concern, or if you feel unwell.

Your Movement Disorder Specialist will have advised you on how to care for your wounds prior to discharge from hospital. You will be given a letter for your Practice Nurse advising when your stitches and steri-strips should be removed, as well as a wound audit questionnaire to complete and bring to your stimulator activation visit.

It is important that you keep your wounds dry and regularly check for signs of infection. Signs of wound infection can include, but are not limited to:

- Redness, swelling, tenderness or pain at the wound site.
- A raised temperature.
- Any leakage from the wound. This may be brown, green or clear.

If you experience any of these symptoms, please contact your GP for advice on treatment, but also inform your Movement Disorder Nurse Specialist straight away. It is important that you also record details of any such symptoms in your wound audit questionnaire.

## Specific advice following DBS surgery

To become familiar with the specific safety guidance, cautions and contra-indications, please refer to the patient information book for your DBS system.

However, some specific points are also summarised below:

- Inform clinicians, including dentists, that you should receive antibiotic cover before any invasive procedures. Your Movement Disorder Nurse Specialist can provide a letter outlining the recommendations for antibiotic cover should your clinician require this.
- It is recommended that you request assistance to bypass security screeners, such as those used in airport security.
- You should proceed with caution through theft detectors and tag deactivators, such as those used in department stores and other public establishments, ensuring you move through the centre of the detector as quickly as possible.
- When travelling in an aeroplane, there is a small risk that cosmic rays could switch your stimulator off. Please check that your stimulator is switched on following your flight.
- If you need further surgery, the stimulator must be switched off for the surgical procedure, and you must inform the surgeon that you should only have bipolar diathermy.
- Advice must be sought before magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) as it can potentially cause significant damage to you.

- You may need to switch your stimulator off if you are having an electrocardiogram (ECG), as stimulation may interfere with the recording.
- It is important that you carry your DBS identity card and patient therapy controller with you at all times.

## Checklist Post-DBS surgery

- Book in to see your Practice Nurse to have your stitches and steri-strips removed through your GP Practice.
  
- Inform the DVLA and your vehicle insurance company that you have had DBS surgery.
  
- Complete your wound audit questionnaire and bring to your stimulator activation visit.
  
- Please refer to your stimulator activation visit booklet for details about this appointment.



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### How to contact us:



**Advanced Treatment Service**  
(Deep Brain Stimulation &  
Duodopa Therapy)  
Bristol Brain Centre  
Elgar House, Southmead Hospital  
BS10 5NB



**Daily Nurse Clinic Line (Mondays to  
Fridays): 0117 414 8269**



**[www.nbt.nhs.uk](http://www.nbt.nhs.uk)**

If you or the individual you are caring for need support reading this leaflet please ask a member of staff for advice.

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