Following your varicose vein surgery

Bandages

Your leg will be bandaged with a Panalast/crepe bandage for …… days and may be replaced by an anti-embolic stocking or left exposed. This should be worn:

- Continuously for …… weeks.
- Followed by …… weeks during the day and taken off at night. Then as wished or as is comfortable.

The leg will be bruised for a while after the bandages are removed. This will gradually fade.

It is not unusual for the leg to feel lumpy when the veins have been removed. This will go in time.

Washing

After the bandage has been removed you can wash the leg or shower, but it is best not to soak in the bath until the stitches have dissolved/been removed.

Wound care

The operation to remove your varicose veins was performed either through:

- Incision in your groin.
- Incision behind the knee.
- Incision in your groin and behind the knee.
- Small cuts (avulsions) in the thigh and/or calf.

The main incisions have been stitched with absorbable stitches that do not need to be removed.

You will need to have your stitches removed in …… days. Please arrange this with the nurse at your G.P. practice.

The smaller cuts in the leg have been closed with sticky paper strips (Steri-strips).
If for any reason you experience severe pain or the foot becomes cold or numb, get up and walk around and take the painkillers if you have not done so recently. If this does not make things better within a short period (no more than an hour), please attend the Emergency Department.

**Recovery from the operation**

The day following surgery you should normally be active as much as the bandages allow. You will feel better if you take regular short walks. You should do this at least twice a day. When you start walking you will feel a little stiffness in the leg(s) but this should ease fairly quickly. Most people find that they are able to move about comfortably after a few days. When sitting elevate your legs. Avoid standing for long periods.

**Work**

The time needed off work varies between individuals. Return to work depends on your being comfortable and sufficiently mobile to do your job. A sick note can be provided.

**Driving**

You may drive when you feel fully recovered from the anaesthetic and can safely perform an emergency stop. You should avoid long journeys until the bandages have been removed.

**Problems you may encounter following surgery**

**Bleeding**

If oozing appears through the bandages, elevate your leg and apply firm pressure with a clean towel or gauze. If bleeding continues after 10 minutes you will need to attend the Emergency Department.

**Infection**

If your wound becomes red, inflamed or painful this may be a sign of infection. This may settle down but if you are concerned, you should contact your GP or NHS 111 Service.

NHS Constitution. Information on your rights and responsibilities. Available at [www.nhs.uk/aboutnhs/constitution](http://www.nhs.uk/aboutnhs/constitution)

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

© North Bristol NHS Trust. This edition published November 2016. Review due November 2018. NBT002203