

# Following minor gynaecological surgery



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- Following your operation you should have an adult to take you home and remain with you overnight. Transport home should be by private car or accompanied taxi transport
- If you have had an operation on your tummy, you may have small dressings in place that can be removed after 48 hours, and dissolving stitches that will take a few weeks to dissolve. The waterproof dressing will be fine if you shower, but it is important not to bath for 48 hours. Do keep the wound clean and watch for redness, soreness or swelling which can mean an infection - if you have any problems see your GP.
- If you have had a vaginal operation, it is normal to have some bleeding for 7-10 days following your operation. However, please contact the ward if:
  - the bleeding is very heavy or you pass blood clots
  - the bleeding is offensive smelling
  - you have very bad pain ( not made better with basic painkillers)
  - if the bleeding lasts longer than 10-14 days, please seek advice from your GP.
- If problems arise very soon after surgery, contact with the ward is important. We may advise you to see the GP, but sometimes ask you to come back to the ward to be seen. Although rare, if you experience very heavy bleeding, severe pain or feel dizzy and unwell, you may need to be seen in the Accident and Emergency Department instead.

- To reduce the risk of infection, use sanitary towels and not tampons for this bleed and your next period. Sexual intercourse is not advised for 2-4 weeks (until bleeding and pain settles).

If you have had a general anaesthetic please remember that anaesthetic drugs stay in your system for several hours. During this time you will react more slowly, which means that you are more likely to have an accident.

Remember for at least 24 hours after the operation:

- You must not drive a car or any other vehicle
- You should not cook or operate machinery
- You should not drink alcohol
- You should drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids
- You may eat what you like – light diet nothing too greasy or spicy
- You should take things easy until you feel fully recovered
- You should not take any important legal decisions or sign any documents

## **Common medicines that you may be advised to take or given to take home**

Most basic painkillers can be bought at the chemist e.g. Paracetamol / Ibuprofen. These are not usually supplied by the hospital. Dosages are explained below.

Before you are discharged home you may be given one of the following packs of tablets, which can include painkillers, and/or anti sickness medicine.

**Please read the following information and be aware of the instructions on the tablet packs.**

### **Paracetamol 500mg**

The normal dose is one or two tablets every four to six hours. A maximum of 8 tablets can be taken in 24 hours. **DO NOT EXCEED THIS DOSE.** Be careful as well not to take any other medication/tablets that contain paracetamol. Also be aware that in young people or adults who are very small dose of paracetamol are 500mg (one tablet four times a day).

### **Paracetamol and Ibuprofen 400mg three times a day**

Do not exceed this dose. Do not take these at the same time as any other anti inflammatory tablets (such as Nurofen, aspirin, Voltarol, or naproxen). It is OK to take them if you are on a low dose of aspirin (such as one or two tablets once a day) for your heart or another condition. If you are unsure if other medicines you might be taking are anti inflammatory ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

These tablets can sometimes cause indigestion and should be taken with or after food. If you develop indigestion stop taking them.

Also if you have asthma it is better not to use anti inflammatory painkillers. They can induce an asthma attack. However, If you have used them before without any problems, that should be fine.

## **Paracetamol, Ibuprofen, Codeine Phosphate 30-60mg**

Codeine phosphate is a stronger painkiller which can be taken 4 to 6 hourly for pain. These tablets can cause drowsiness, nausea, and light-headedness. They can also cause constipation if taken for a number of days. You can take these every 4 to 6 hours, and should take no more than 8 in 24 hours

## **Tramadol 50-100mg**

This is a strong painkiller, and is a synthetic morphine. Take them only if you need them. They can cause

drowsiness, nausea and light-headedness. They can also cause constipation if taken for a number of days. They can be taken every 4 to 6 hours, and you must take no more than the take a maximum of 8 tablets a day. (400mg)

## **Prochlorperazine (Stemtil®) 5mg or Cyclizine 50 mg**

These are anti sickness tablets. They can be taken every 8 hours as needed. No more than 3 tablets in 24 hours. They can also cause drowsiness. Rarely they can cause other side effects such as shaking and odd movements, if this happens stop taking them and contact your doctor.

## **Additional medication you may be discharged with:**

- Ferrous sulphate 200mg - usually one tablet twice a day. This is an iron tablet used for anaemia. It can sometimes make people feel a bit nauseous and upset their stomach, taking it with some food should help if this happens. It can often make your stools appear much darker, this is nothing to worry about.

- Cephadrine 500mg – This is an antibiotic, usually taken 3 or 4 times a day – do check on the information on the front of the packagin as to how many times a day you will need to take it. (often used if allergies to penicillin exist)
- Metronidazole 400mg – this again is an antibiotic, often used along with Cephadrine. It is taken 3 times a day. It is important not to drink alcohol alongside these antibiotics.
- Co-Amixiclav (Augmentin®) 375mg or 625mg This is again an antibiotic of the penicillin family. It is taken 3 times a day

When you are discharged, a member of staff from the ward will talk you through your medication.

**If You Are Unsure About Your Tablets Please Ask A Nurse Before Leaving Hospital. Or you can phone the Patient Medication Helpline on 0117 3235445, Monday - Friday, 9am to 5pm.**

## Follow up

Many women will not need follow up, but if follow has been advised, an appointment will be sent in the post.

If you have been expecting follow up and no letter has arrived please ring cotswold ward (the telephone number is at the back of this leaflet)

## References and sources of further information

Joint Formulary Committee. British National Formulary. [56] ed. London: British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain; [last accessed February 2014]

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

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### How to contact us:



0117 414 6792 8am - 4pm  
0117 414 6785 (24 hours)



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

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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