

Patient Information

Abdominal Surgery – Post Operative Advice

Your ward therapist will go through this leaflet with you and fill in the appropriate repetitions of the exercises to start off with. Try and increase this amount each time and as you improve. You should feel muscle fatigue but no pain. Following your surgery you may experience some difficulty taking deep breaths and/or with your mobility. This may be due to pain or as a consequence of having had an anaesthetic.

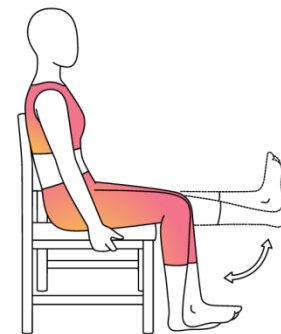
This leaflet offers some simple advice on how to help yourself with your recovery. If it is felt necessary you may also be referred to be assessed by a physiotherapist for more specific treatment.

Early seated exercises (Day 1 onwards)

Sit up tall in your chair with your back well supported

Lift your foot up off the floor until your knee is straight, and then hold this position for a count of five. Lower the foot slowly to the floor. Repeat with the other leg.

Repeat _____ times.



Lift your knees, as if marching on the spot, and place them down with control. Build up to a rhythm that is comfortable for you. If you are able to, bring in an arm swing.

Continue for _____ Seconds



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Raise your toes up, keeping heels on floor. Hold for 3 counts. Raise heels up, keeping toes on the floor. Hold for 3 counts.

Repeat _____ times.



Breathing exercises

It is essential for your recovery that you have sufficient pain relief to allow you to do these exercises. You can start doing these exercises as soon as you wake up after your surgery.

Deep breathing:

Position yourself comfortably but make sure you are not slumped. If you are on the bed put a slight bend under your knees to take the tension off your tummy and sit up as tall as possible. (you could use a rolled up towel/pillowcase to support your knees)

- Take a deep breath in through your nose. Imagine you are filling your tummy with air. Keep your shoulders relaxed.
- Hold your breath for 3 seconds then relax to let the air out through your mouth.
- Repeat for 3-4 breaths (if you do more it may make you feel a little light headed). Then return to your normal breathing.

Try to take 3-4 deep breaths like this every hour.

Supported coughing

You may be reluctant to cough due to pain but it is very important that you don't allow any phlegm to build up in your chest to prevent you developing a chest infection.

- To make coughing more comfortable position yourself as for the previous exercise.
- Firmly hug a folded towel, blanket or a pillow in towards your tummy as you cough.



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This will also help to improve the strength of your cough and make it more effective.

Sitting out of bed

It is important that you do not remain in bed longer than absolutely necessary.

This is important to:

- improve your circulation and prevent blood clots from forming
- prevent chest infections
- encourage bowel movement
- build up muscle strength and stamina

Drips, drains and catheters do not prevent you from getting out of bed or starting to mobilise. It is likely that the nurses and/or the physiotherapist will help you to get up the first time and will continue to work with you until you can do this independently. Aim to sit out for one hour twice daily to start with and gradually increase the time as you feel able to.

Walking

Try to get up and start walking to build up your exercise tolerance as soon as possible.

If you are feeling unsteady on your feet or can't manage drips, drains and catheters, you can ask a nurse to assist you. If you are really struggling, you will be referred to a physiotherapist.

Start by walking to the bathroom and back. Then gradually increase the walking distance on the ward as you are able to.

Try to go for a short walk minimum 4 times daily.

Continue to gradually increase your walking tolerance once you are at home.

For further information please discuss with your Physiotherapist or call the office on 01793 605126 Monday to Friday 8:00-16:30, this has an answerphone service if the office is unmanned.



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Smoking will not be permitted on any NHS site in England. Smoking will not be permitted within any of our buildings or anywhere outside on our sites. Smoking facilities will not be provided. Please be considerate of others when vaping in hospital grounds.

This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email gwh.pals@nhs.net

Document Control

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