

Recovering after day case surgery in gynaecology

Gynaecology

Information for Patients

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This information leaflet should help you understand what you can expect after having day case surgery in gynaecology.

We expect that you should be able to go home on the same day as your operation. Your nurse will make sure you are not in pain and it is safe for you to go home before you are discharged. This usually takes between 3 and 6 hours after the operation. You may need to stay in hospital overnight if you are not well enough to go home.

You should make sure that another adult is with you overnight. You should not drive for at least 24 hours - longer if you feel you would not be safe to drive.

How will I feel after the procedure?

Bleeding from your vagina

If you have your operation through your vagina it is quite normal to have some bleeding or discharge for 2 to 6 weeks after your operation. This depends on what operation you have had. This might be yellow or red or brown. You **must not** use a tampon during this time. Contact your GP if your vaginal discharge smells bad or you feel unwell as this could be a sign of infection. Please contact us if your bleeding is soaking a super sized pad every 1 to 2 hours or with clots larger than a 10 pence coin. Do not wash inside the vagina (vaginal douche) or use cleaning products.

Tummy wounds

Often any cuts on your tummy, if you have them, can be slightly red and uncomfortable during the first 1 to 2 weeks. Itching around the wounds is also normal. Please tell your GP (or call the ward) if your wound becomes hot, painful, swollen or starts to discharge fluid as you might have an infection. Do not use perfumed soap whilst your wound is healing.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

How much pain will I have?

You may have some tummy pain. If you had keyhole surgery, you may also have some pain in your shoulder. Take painkillers regularly at home such as paracetamol or ibuprofen. Make sure you have enough at home so that you do not run out. You should be able to reduce the number over the next few days or weeks if you have had major surgery as a day case. Sometimes, painkillers can make you sleepy, slightly sick and make it harder to poo (constipation). Try to eat extra fruit and fibre to avoid becoming constipated or take a gentle laxative to help you poo. Your pharmacist can recommend one for you.

What can I do to help myself recover quicker?

- Eat healthy food and drink plenty of fluids.
- Walk around regularly. Do not just stay in bed when you are at home.
- You can have a shower the day after your operation. You might feel dizzy, so please have an adult around to help you. If needed, leave the door unlocked. You should avoid having a bath if possible for the first 2 weeks after your surgery as this can soften the stitches before your wound is fully healed.
- Do not have sex or use tampons or go swimming for at least 3 weeks, or until the bleeding stops – whichever is longer. This is to reduce the risk of infection. If you have had day case major surgery such as a hysterectomy or vaginal repair you may be advised to avoid sex for 6 weeks.
- Do not drink alcohol until 24 hours after surgery or whilst taking pain killers.
- Your next period may be late but should arrive within 6 weeks unless you no longer have your womb or have gone through the menopause.
- You should not drive straight after any operation. You should be able to safely and comfortably do an emergency stop. Usually this will be between 1 to 2 weeks for most minor operations. You should check with your insurance company before your drive.
- There is a small risk of blood clots forming in the veins of your legs after any operation. These clots can travel to the lungs (pulmonary embolism) which could be serious. You can reduce the risk of clots by:
 - getting up and about as soon as you can after your operation
 - doing exercises when you are resting, for example: pump each foot up and down briskly for 30 seconds by moving your ankle, move each foot in a circular motion for 30 seconds, bend and straighten your leg 1 leg at a time, 3 times for each leg.
 - you may be given stockings to wear day and night for 2 to 6 weeks
 - you may be given blood-thinning injections to lower the chance of a clot forming, mainly if you are overweight or have other health issues. You may need to keep on having these injections once a day when you go home. You will be told how long you will need to use these.
- Stopping smoking will help your health in all sorts of ways, such as lowering the risk of a wound infection or chest problems after your anaesthetic even if it is just while you are recovering. If you

would like information about a stopping smoking clinic in your area, speak with the nurse in your GP surgery.

Guide on what to expect after surgery

Activity / week	1	2	3	4	5+6
Full kettle	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Light dusting	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Making a snack	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Cooking	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
Light washing & ironing	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
Carrying heavy washing baskets	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Hoovering and housework	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Heavy shopping bag	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Driving (Check with your insurance)	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Sex	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Swimming	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Lifting toddlers	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Aerobic exercise	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Gardening	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Work (your doctor can advise you)	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES

The above table is a guide only. Talk to your nurse, doctor or GP if you have specific queries.

Listen to your body. If you feel uncomfortable – **stop** – and try again the next day.

When can I go back to work?

This depends on the type of surgery you have had. You should be able to go back to work between 2 days and 6 weeks after your day case surgery. Your nurse or doctor can talk to you about this before you go home and give you a Fitness to Work Certificate if you need one.

Follow up

We will write a discharge letter to your GP. This will explain what was found and done at your operation and if any follow up is needed

If we took samples (biopsies), we will write to you with the results within 6 weeks and explain if any more treatment or follow up is needed.

When should I get help?

- If you feel generally unwell or have a fever
- Problems with peeing like burning, stinging, blood in your pee
- There is redness, swelling, discharge coming from the cuts in the skin, if you have them
- Tummy pain that is getting worse or you are being sick
- You are bleeding too much from your vagina changing pads every 1 to 2 hours – especially if it smells bad
- Painful, red, swollen calf (**go to the Emergency Department at Leicester Royal Infirmary**)
- **Difficulty breathing—Call an ambulance**

Contact numbers for advice after you have gone home

Leicester General Hospital - Ward 31 (24 hour service): 0116 258 4843

Leicester Royal Infirmary - Gynaecology Assessment Unit (24 hour service): 0116 258 6259

They will not be able to give you your results on these numbers

What to do if you cannot attend your appointment

It is very important that you attend your appointment. If you cannot attend **please let us know** so that your appointment time can be used by someone else and we can arrange another appointment for you.

If your appointment is at:

Leicester General Hospital (LGH), please call 0116 258 4821

Hinckley and District Hospital, Loughborough Hospital or Melton Mowbray hospital please call 01455 441805 / 01455 441862

NHS non-emergency helpline: 111

Please allow plenty of time for parking. If you are more than 20 minutes late for your appointment, it may need to be rebooked for another day.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।
Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk