Welcome to the day surgery unit. This information booklet will help you understand the common side effects of some of the medicines that may be advised for you following surgery. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

Why am I receiving this leaflet?
This information booklet has been developed following feedback from a Picker survey carried out in November 2014. The results showed that patients wanted more information about the medications they were provided with when they left hospital.

All patients over the age of 18 should receive this information when they leave the day surgery unit (DSU). You should use it as a guide if you have any queries about your pain relief medication and the possible side effects. You will have been advised at your pre-assessment appointment (if applicable) to keep a supply of simple pain relief medication at home in preparation for when you are discharged from hospital following your surgery.

What is pain relief medication?
Pain relief medications (also known as analgesics) come in a variety of different forms (such as tablets or capsules) and also vary in their mode of action and their strength. Below is a list of commonly used drugs for adults. If you have any allergies to medicines you should inform your healthcare professional as soon as possible.

You may be supplied with other medications, such as antibiotics, which are not for pain relief. The healthcare professional looking after you will explain why you need these additional medications and how you should take them.
Mild pain relief medication

Paracetamol
Paracetamol will not be supplied on discharge, but is available from your local chemist. A maximum of two x 500mg tablets (total 1,000mg) can be taken at any one time at intervals of four to six hours.

- Do not exceed more than eight tablets (4,000mg) in any 24 hour period.
- Do not take any other paracetamol-containing products at the same time, as this may result in you receiving more than the maximum daily allowance of paracetamol.

Your 1st dose can be taken ………………..hours after leaving the day surgery unit

Please note that paracetamol will not relieve any swelling or inflammation.

Strong pain relief medication
If you require pain relief that is stronger than paracetamol, one of the following, strong pain relief medications may be prescribed on for you.

Codeine or dihydrocodeine
A maximum of two x 30mg tablets (total 60mg) can be taken at any one time at intervals of four to six hours.

Your 1st dose can be taken ………………..hours after leaving the day surgery unit

Tramadol
A maximum of two x 50mg capsules (total 100mg) can be taken at any one time at intervals of four to six hours. If you suffer from epilepsy please inform your healthcare professional.
Your 1st dose can be taken ..........................hours after leaving the day surgery unit

With strong pain relief medication, please adhere to the following instructions:
- Do not exceed more than eight tablets/capsules in any 24 hour period.
- A maximum of two tablets/capsules can be taken at any one time at intervals of four to six hours.
- Be aware that these medications may cause drowsiness and constipation.
- Do not drive or use heavy machinery whilst taking these medications.
- Do not drink alcohol whilst taking these medications.
- Note that these medicines will not relieve any swelling and inflammation.
- Note that taking paracetamol regularly with these medications will help control pain more effectively.

Combined pain relief medication
These will not be supplied by the hospital when you are discharged. However, if you are taking these prior to your surgery, you may need to continue taking them on a more regular basis.

Co-codamol (contains paracetamol and codeine)
There are two types of co-codamol available – 8/500 and 30/50.

8/500: Each tablet contains 8mg codeine and 500mg paracetamol (8/500). Co-codamol 8/500 is available from your local chemist.

30/500: Each tablet contains 30mg codeine and 500mg paracetamol (30/500). Co-codamol 30/500 is a prescription only medicine (POM) and you will be required to obtain an adequate supply from your usual prescriber.
Your 1st dose can be taken ………………hours after leaving the day surgery unit

**Co-dydramol (contains paracetamol and dihydrocodeine)**
Each tablet contains 10mg dihydrocodeine and 500mg paracetamol (10/500). Co-dydramol 10/500 is a prescription only medicine (POM) and you will be required to obtain an adequate supply from your usual prescriber.

Your 1st dose can be taken ………………hours after leaving the day surgery unit

**With combined pain relief medication, please adhere to the following instructions:**

- Do not exceed more than eight tablets in any 24 hour period.
- A maximum of two tablets can be taken at any one time at intervals of four to six hours.
- Do not take any other paracetamol or paracetamol-containing products while taking combined pain relief medications, as this may result in you receiving more than the maximum daily allowance of paracetamol.
- Be aware that these medications may cause drowsiness and constipation.
- Do not drive or use heavy machinery whilst taking these medications.
- Do not drink alcohol whilst taking these medications.

Please note that these medicines will not relieve any swelling or inflammation.

**Anti-inflammatory medication**
Ibuprofen will not be supplied by the hospital when you are discharged. It is available from your local chemist.
A maximum of two x 200mg tablets (total 400mg) can be taken at any one time every four to six hours.

Your 1st dose can be taken ..........................hours after leaving the day surgery unit

If you are taking anti-inflammatory medication, please adhere to the following instructions:
  • Do not take more than 2,400mg of ibuprofen in any 24 hour period.
  • Speak to your doctor before taking this medicine if you suffer from asthma or have a history of stomach ulcers.
  • Always take these medicines with or after food.
  • Do not take with any other form of anti-inflammatory medication.
  • Do not exceed the maximum dose stated on the packaging.

Further information
Emergency contact numbers for patients treated in the day surgery unit (DSU)
If you have a problem on the day of your surgery, please follow the procedure below:
  • Up until 7pm in the evening on the day you have left the day surgery unit, please call us on 020 8725 0418.
  • After 7pm until 8am the following morning, please call the emergency nurse-on-call on 07956 571 308. Please note that calls made to this mobile between 8am and 7pm are not answered.
  • From 8am the morning after your surgery, please contact your own GP for advice.
If you need further information about your medicines, please call your GP or local chemist in the first instance. Alternatively, the St George’s Medicines Information Service is available Monday to Friday between 9:15am and 5:30pm on 020 8725 1033 or medinfo@stgeorges.nhs.uk. In case of an emergency, please go straight to your nearest accident and emergency (A&E) department.
Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)
PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing (near the lift foyer).
Tel: 020 8725 2453  Email: pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices
NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.
Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111
You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it’s not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.
Tel: 111