

Discharge advice for patients going home after the implantation of a Deep Brain Stimulator

This leaflet explains more about returning to your everyday activities after your surgery. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

After leaving hospital

You may feel concerned about the thought of returning home after your operation. Hopefully during your stay with us your questions will have been answered. This leaflet has been designed by the team to give you support and guidelines about your recovery at home.

We feel it is important that you do not feel alone and isolated at home, so please contact us if you need specific advice or support.

Please contact the following numbers:

Movement Disorders Nurse: 020 8725 4677
Movement Disorders Co-ordinator: 020 8725 4680
Brodie Ward: 020 8725 4646
McKissock Ward: 020 8725 4644

Alternatively, your GP and Practice Nurse are there to help, as are the secretaries for your consultants and doctors at the hospital.

Looking after your wound

Your scalp stitches or staples need to be taken out on the 10th - 14th day after your operation. If you are still in hospital this may be done before you go home. If not, then you will need to make an appointment with the Practice Nurse at your GP's surgery. The chest sutures are generally absorbable.

Your chest wound may initially be tender but gradually becomes pain free after a short period. This is quite normal.

As your wound is healing already it does not need any special attention. However when you are bathing, it is better to have a shower rather than a bath and to avoid lathering the scalp wounds. This prevents the wound from becoming sodden (soaking wet), which can increase the risk of infection and delay healing.

You must contact the team at the hospital as a matter of urgency if you notice any of the following symptoms. They may mean that you have an infection which needs treatment with antibiotics:

- Any leakage from the wound. This may be brown, green, or clear.
- An increase in soreness or very bad itching around the wound that happens a few days after you have returned home.
- Redness or any swelling or pain at or around your wound site.
- Any fever/high temperature

If this happens outside of normal office hours you must contact the Neurosurgical team at the hospital. If your GP surgery is closed they will have an 'out of hours' service that you can access.

About the stimulator

If there is anything that is not clear, do not hesitate to ask your nurse or contact a member of the Movement Disorders Team.

If you need any of the following procedures in the future please contact the Movement Disorders Team for advice:

- Surgery
- X-rays
- Scans
- Invasive procedures (a procedure which might cause bleeding)
- Dental treatment (which might involve ultrasonic probes).

This is because certain equipment cannot be used if you have a deep brain stimulator implanted.

Now that you have a deep brain stimulator in place, you may not be able to have an MRI scan due to safety reasons. Please discuss this with your Movement Disorders Nurse.

When you are out you must remember to watch out for signs asking people with cardiac pacemakers to see a member of staff. This is because your neuro-stimulator works in a very similar way to cardiac pacemakers and there may be special precautions which you need to take. We will tell you about these before you leave hospital and you will be given an identity card with details of your stimulator. Remember to carry this with you.

Will your medication be changed?

Every person responds differently to his or her medication and to this type of surgery and your medication may be changed before you leave hospital. If so, a member of the Movement

Disorders Team will discuss this with you. If you are unsure about the medication you should be taking, please discuss this with us before you leave the ward. Once you get home, if you experience any symptoms that are unusual for you, please consult your GP or the Movement Disorders Nurse.

When can I resume sexual activity?

The simple answer to this is whenever you are ready. If you are unsure about how your medications affect any contraception you may be taking, please ask your GP or pharmacist for advice. The stimulator itself should have no effects on any method of contraception used.

When should I return to work?

How quickly you return to work depends on what you do for a job. You should discuss this with your doctor before you leave hospital. A period of four to six weeks off work is not unusual. If you need a Sickness Certificate please ask for this before you go home.

Will I be able to drive?

We advise you not to drive for six weeks after your Deep Brain Stimulation. By law, you are not required to inform the DVLA of surgery. The Consultant managing your care will advise when it is suitable to return to driving. The usual considerations for driving in relation to the DVLA and Parkinson's disease continue to apply.

What should I do if I have any complications?

You have already started on the road to a good recovery and we are confident that this should continue at home.

Sometimes, for whatever reason, people may develop post-operative complications or side effects from stimulation. Please see your GP or phone the ward if you experience:

- Any different, worsening or sudden headache
- Any neck stiffness, high temperature or pain when you look at light
- A rash
- Lethargy or tiredness that doesn't improve
- Any chest pain or calf pain
- Fits/seizures or "funny turns"
- Blurred vision or worsening vision
- Drowsiness, confusion or any weakness in your arms or legs
- Any vivid dreams or hallucinations
- Vomiting or feeling sick.

Will I have a follow-up appointment?

You will be given a follow up appointment either before you leave the ward or sent in the post.

We aim to see you for a full stimulation programming session within two to four weeks. If you have not received anything within two weeks after your discharge from hospital, please contact one of the following:

Movement Disorders Team Nurse: 020 8725 4677
Movement Disorders Co-ordinator: 020 8725 4680

A member of the team is usually available between the hours of 8.30am to 4.30pm. As we are working with patients we may not be able to answer your call, but please leave an answer phone message and we will return your call at the earliest opportunity.

Going home checklist

- Tablets and a discharge advice sheet
- Any of your own tablets which you brought with you
- Transport arranged – your own or hospital transport if necessary
- All your belongings, including any valuables we have locked away and any cards, etc.

Useful sources of information

Deep Brain Stimulation for Movement Disorders

<https://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/service/neuro/neurology/movement-disorders/deep-brain-stimulation-for-movement-disorders/>

DVLA

DVLA drivers' medical enquiries
Telephone: 0300 790 6806
Monday to Friday, 8am to 5:30pm
Saturday, 8am to 1pm

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the team (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

Consultant Secretaries:

Dr Paviour 020 8725 4627
Dr Morgante 020 8725 2470
Mr Erlick Pereira 020 8725 4173

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

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 9.30am and 4.30pm, 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



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