

Enhanced Recovery After Day-Case Bariatric Surgery

Introduction

At St George's Hospital, we use an Enhanced Recovery Programme for patients undergoing bariatric surgery.

Enhanced Recovery is an evidence-based approach designed to help you recover more quickly and safely after your operation. Research shows that patients who begin drinking fluids, mobilising, and returning to normal activities earlier after surgery often experience fewer complications and a smoother recovery.

Our day-case bariatric surgery pathway aims to help suitable patients return home safely on the same day as their operation, while maintaining high standards of care and safety.

Preparing for Your Surgery

Preparing well for surgery can improve your recovery and reduce the risk of complications.

Improving Your Health Before Surgery

Before your operation, it is important to optimise your general health as much as possible. This may include:

- Stopping smoking
- Reducing alcohol intake
- Improving fitness levels
- Optimising medical conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure

Even gentle exercise, such as regular walking, can improve your recovery after surgery.

Breathing Exercises

Practising deep breathing exercises before surgery can help reduce the risk of chest infections afterwards. You will also be encouraged to continue deep breathing exercises after your operation.

Oral Hygiene

Brushing your teeth twice daily and using mouthwash before and after surgery may help reduce the risk of chest infections.

Eating and Drinking Before Surgery

It is extremely important to stay well hydrated before surgery.

Please aim to drink at least 1.5 litres of fluid during the 24 hours before your operation.

You may eat normally until 6 hours before your surgery (including milk-containing drinks). After this time, you may drink clear fluids only up until 2 hours before surgery.

Please carefully follow the fasting instructions provided in your admission letter.

What to Bring to Hospital

Please bring:

- Comfortable loose-fitting clothes and supportive footwear
- Any regular medications in their original packaging
- Your CPAP machine if you use one for obstructive sleep apnoea
- Fluids suitable after surgery such as sugar-free squash, Oxo cubes or clear broth sachets, tea bags or coffee sachets, and smooth low-sugar desserts that do not require refrigeration.

Please hand your medications to the nursing staff when you arrive.

After Your Surgery

Once you are fully awake after surgery, you will be encouraged to start drinking water.

You should begin with small sips (approximately 30 mL every 10–15 minutes). If this is tolerated without nausea or vomiting, you can gradually increase the amount you drink.

Tepid or room-temperature fluids are often easier to tolerate than very hot or cold drinks.

If you feel sick, please tell the nursing staff promptly so that anti-sickness medication can be given.

Early movement is one of the most important parts of enhanced recovery.

Walking helps reduce the risk of blood clots (DVT), chest infections, and trapped wind discomfort.

You will be encouraged to walk with assistance initially, and mobilise regularly throughout the day.

Pain Relief

Some discomfort after surgery is expected. You will receive regular pain relief and anti-sickness medication to go home with.

Going Home

You may be discharged home on the same day once you have met the discharge criteria.

This includes:

- Stable observations
- Pain controlled with tablet medication
- Able to drink fluids adequately
- Mobilising independently
- Minimal nausea or vomiting
- Review by the surgical team
- A responsible adult available to stay with you for 24 hours after discharge

You must not drive yourself home after surgery.

After Discharge

You will be provided with pain relief medication, anti-sickness medication, a discharge summary, and contact information for the bariatric team.

A member of the bariatric team will contact you by telephone the day after surgery.

You will also have an early, in-person follow-up appointment arranged on the first Thursday after discharge.

Your Recovery

Recovering from bariatric surgery is a partnership between you and your healthcare team.

Early drinking, mobilisation, breathing exercises, and following the advice in this leaflet will help support a safe recovery and reduce complications.

When to Seek Urgent Medical Attention

Please contact the hospital urgently or attend the Emergency Department if you experience:

- Severe abdominal pain
- Persistent vomiting
- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain
- Bleeding
- Fever or feeling significantly unwell
- Inability to tolerate fluids

Contact us

Non-urgent Queries:

Bariatric Clinical Nurse Specialist Team (Monday to Friday, daytime hours)

Annika.Stewart@stgeorges.nhs.uk

Urgent Queries:

Please contact the hospital switchboard and ask for the on-call surgical registrar.

St George's Hospital Switchboard: 020 8672 1255

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 advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or care. You can contact the PALS team on the advisory telephone line Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 2pm to 5pm.

A Walk-in service is available:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and 4pm

Friday between 10am and 2pm.

The Walk-in and Advisory telephone services are closed on Wednesdays.

Please contact PALS in advance to check if there are any changes to opening times.

PALS is based within the hospital in the ground floor main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings.

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS UK

The NHS 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

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



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