Patient Information

Day Surgery
Heavitree Day Case Unit

For Adults Attending the RD&E Heavitree Hospital, Day Case Unit, Gladstone Road, Exeter EX1 2ED
Telephone: 01392 405301

Welcome from the Day Surgery Team

Your admission date is given in the accompanying letter. If you have been advised the surgery will be under general anaesthetic or sedation you will need to be assessed by a pre-operative nurse. This may be by telephone or by attending the hospital; details and the date for this will be included in a separate letter.

If your medical or social circumstances have changed please contact your Consultant’s secretary or alternatively the Heavitree Day Case Unit (HDCU) reception: 01392 405301 (Monday to Friday 8am - 4pm)

Before you arrive

Please read this information and take note of the instructions below:

If you become ill, have been in contact with anyone suffering from diarrhoea and vomiting or cannot keep this appointment for any reason, please let us know as early as possible so that another patient can benefit.

Please arrive promptly at the time indicated so that we can admit and get you ready for theatre. There will be an interval between your admission and the procedure, (which can be up to 2-3 hours).

Please bring the following:
- A current prescription sheet
- Any tablets, medicines or inhalers that you may need
- Name and phone number of relative or friend collecting you after your operation
- Something to read/keep you occupied
- Dressing gown and slippers/slip on shoes
- Urine specimen (It is the Trust’s policy to routinely test all female patients between the ages of 12-55 for pregnancy)

Preparing to come to the hospital

In general you should take all your normal medications on the day of surgery, with a sip of water.

Exceptions are:
- Blood thinning drugs (e.g. warfarin or clopidogrel)
- Diabetes medication (insulin)

If you have diabetes, are pregnant, on blood thinning medication or take herbal remedies please contact your Consultant’s secretary for advice unless this has been discussed with the pre-assessment nurse.

For your comfort please ensure you wear appropriate loose clothing and shoes for after your surgery.
Please do not wear make-up, nail varnish or jewellery as they may need to be removed for surgery.

Please do not bring in any valuables- the hospital accepts no responsibility for loss of property.

Please note you are permitted to use a mobile phone, tablet, or an electronic device on the hospital site but there is no free Wi-Fi connection available.

Arriving at the hospital

Please report to the HDCU reception desk on the lower ground floor. From the main entrance, please follow the signs to the Day Case Unit also marked to Pain Management and Physiotherapy (café on your right); take the steps or lift down at the end of corridor 2.

Limited parking is available at the main entrance of the hospital in clearly marked areas. Parking is controlled by a pay and display system which takes cash or debit card. Twenty minutes free parking is available for friends/relatives to drop off / collect patients from the DCU by entering the last 3 letters of the car's registration number into the ticket machine for a valid ticket.

Depending on the type of surgery/anaesthetic please check before planning to drive yourself to and from hospital.

Alternatively, you may be dropped off (and collected) at the side entrance to the hospital on Polsloe Road.

Day of Operation

Please read the following instructions carefully, if you do not follow the instructions given your operation may be postponed.

Please shower or bath prior to coming into hospital but do not apply any deodorant, spray or lotion to skin.

Please avoid smoking, alcohol or illicit substances on the day of surgery.

If you wear spectacles, contact lenses or dentures you may be asked to remove them for the duration of the operation. Please bring an appropriate container for storage of these items.

Patients having surgery under local anaesthetic (awake) may not need to be starved for surgery please read the accompanying letter for instructions.

For those having general anaesthetic (asleep) or sedation (drowsy) please follow the following advice:

Morning Operations

Please do not consume any milk, fizzy drinks, juice or solid food from midnight. You may drink still water, black tea or black coffee up until 7am.

Please do not consume any sweets or chewing gum after midnight as this increases gastric juices caused by chewing.

Afternoon Operations

On the day of surgery you may have a light breakfast, e.g. tea and toast or small portion of cereal but this must be finished by 7am. After this you may only drink still water, black tea or black coffee until 11am.

Please do not consume any sweets or chewing gum after 7 am as this increases gastric juices caused by chewing.

General Information

Smoking is not allowed anywhere in the hospital or hospital grounds.

After your operation you will be offered light refreshments of tea/coffee/squash and toast/ biscuits. If you have specific dietary needs please bring a snack with you as there are limited catering facilities at Heavitree Hospital.

There is a coffee bar at the main entrance for relatives/friends open from 9am - 3:30pm.

Leaving Hospital

A friend or relative must collect you directly from the HDCU and accompany you home by car or taxi. On discharge the nurse will supply you with post operative advice, contact numbers and any medication/dressings needed for your recovery period.
Depending on the procedure you may need to have time off work; patients are able to self-certificate as unfit for work up to 7 days. If a longer period is needed a medical certificate will be required and issued at the Doctor’s discretion.

Due to the number of patients attending HDCU for morning and afternoon surgery (there are 3 operating theatres), staff would appreciate friends/relatives to be flexible when collecting patients, as discharge times may vary.

Depending on the type of surgery/anaesthetic, a patient may be ready to leave less than half an hour following a local anaesthetic procedure, to more than 1-2 hours following sedation or general anaesthesia.

The HDCU is open at 8 am and closes at 7pm.

Direct line for patient information: 01392 405306 (Theatre 1), 01392 405294 (Theatre 2/3).

Friends/relatives collecting patients on the afternoon list may find access to the HDCU easier from the side entrance on Polsloe road after 6pm. As the main entrance to the hospital closes for security purposes.

There are clear signs to the HDCU from the loading bay area. Please refer to the map under the “Arriving at the Hospital” section.

At Home

Advice following a General Anaesthetic or Sedation:

It is essential that you travel home by car (not public transport) with another adult. A responsible adult must remain with you for the first 24 hours after your operation.

If you have any problems please contact your own GP, call 111 for advice or attend local NHS walk in centre/hospital taking your discharge letter with you.

The drugs you receive may remain in your body for up to 24 hours: this may temporarily affect your co-ordination and logical thinking therefore:

- Do not drink any alcohol for 24 hours
- Do not operate machinery (including cookers) or drive for 24 hours as your motor insurance will be invalid
- Do not sign any legal documents or make important decisions
- Drink plenty of fluids, eat a light diet and a gentle return to normal activities is encouraged.
- Be careful when you have your first shower/bath as a hot steamy bathroom can make you feel light headed, avoid locking the door so that people are able to assist you in an emergency

We hope you have found this information useful.

We always welcome feedback.

We look forward to meeting you on the day.