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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Aneurin Bevan
University Health Board

Enhanced Recovery Programme for Colorectal Surgery

Patient Information Leaflet

Introduction

Welcome to the Enhanced Recovery after Surgery programme (ERAS), at the Royal Gwent Hospital

The aim of this booklet is to help you to understand and participate in your programme of care following your surgery.

To achieve this, you need to be aware of the expectations of the programme and to participate in achieving these daily.

The goals we work towards are achievable, and are designed to help you to recover soon from your surgery and to regain your independence so that you can go home as soon as possible.

Your operation

Your surgeon will have discussed your treatment options with you, including the risk benefits and alternatives.

Before Admission

- Prepare for your operation by eating a varied diet with regular meals
- Include snacks if your appetite is reduced
- If you have lost weight or your appetite is very poor, please tell your 'key worker' so that they can arrange for you to be seen by a dietician
- Take regular exercise (if possible) and get plenty of rest

If you are a smoker, it is a good idea to stop/cut down before your operation if possible. Help for this is available on free-phone 0800 085 2219 or stopsmoking@wales.nhs.uk

Colorectal Nurse Practitioners

You may meet the colorectal nurses in clinic (they only attend the Royal Gwent Hospital) or during your hospital stay.

They can answer any specific questions you may have about your diagnosis and treatment, and help you to deal with any concerns and act as your 'key worker'.

Nurses on the ward will also provide assistance with your stoma during your hospital stay.

PLEASE FIND CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE COLORECTAL NURSES AT THE BACK OF THIS LEAFLET

Preventing blood clots

To reduce the risk of thrombosis (blood clots) we will give you medication and prescribe compression stockings (TEDs) for you to wear during your hospital stay. Early mobility also helps to naturally prevent blood clots.

Managing pain and your anaesthetic

Before your operation, the anaesthetist will meet with you to explain and discuss the type of anaesthetic and pain relief that will be best for you.

This may be:

- An **epidural** – a small drip placed into your back through which local anaesthetic can be given for 48 hours
- A **spinal** – a single injection of a pain killer and local anaesthetic in your back
- A **PCA** – patient controlled analgesia, activated by pressing a button to deliver pain relief

All of the above take place in the anaesthetic room and a drip will be placed in your hand and to give fluids during your operation and another in your wrist to allow close monitoring of your blood pressure. When all the monitoring is in place, the anaesthetist will give the medicines that will send you off to sleep.

Back on your ward

The nursing staff will continue to monitor you closely on the ward.

Some discomfort after surgery is expected. However, good pain control is essential part of your recovery, as it can help you to sleep better, breathe more deeply and to move around more easily after your operation.

Members of the Pain Management Team will visit you after your operation and advise you on ways to ensure your pain is well controlled. Your pain relief will be regularly assessed and adjusted to meet your needs.

You may need to have a drip providing you with fluids. As soon as you are able to drink reasonable amounts your drip will be removed.

Monitoring

Many different things are monitored during your stay including:

- Fluid in
- Fluid out
- Food eaten
- Pain level
- Nausea/vomiting
- Your wound
- Time bowels started working again

These all help to monitor your progress, so please remember to tell a nurse what you eat, drink and bowel movements.

Mobility

An early return to normal mobility is a key part of the ERAS.

Regular walking and sitting out of bed are important to maintain lung health and also to prevent blood clots following your operation.

Physiotherapists and ward staff will help you to achieve this goal as soon as possible after your operation.

The nurses may help you to get out of bed on the same day as your operation if you feel well enough to do so.

Abdominal Pain

Serious pain that lasts for several hours may be an indication of a serious complication such as a leak from where the join was made in your bowel during surgery. This is a rare, but serious occurrence and medical intervention.

IF YOU HAVE PAIN LASTING BETWEEN 1-2 HOURS OR HAVE A FEVER AND FEEL GENERALLY UNWELL, YOU MUST SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE. CALLING THE WARD MAY BE YOUR BEST OPTION IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE CONTACTING ANYONE ELSE

Your Wound

Your wound will be slightly red, bruised and uncomfortable during the first 1-2 weeks following your operation.

If your wound becomes more inflamed, swollen or begins to discharge fluid or gape open then please seek medical attention as it may indicate an infection which may need treatment.

Your bowels

Bowel habits can change when a portion of bowel is removed. Your motions may become loose or constipated which may settle down over time. Some foods may make this worse but adaptations to your diet may help.

If you are passing loose motions more than 3 times a day for more than 4 days, you should increase your fluid intake and you may be prescribed medication (such as Loperamide/Imodium).

If you are **constipated**, drinking plenty of water, eating regular small meals and increased your activity level can help.

If constipation lasts for more than 3-4 days, seek medical advice.

Appetite

Your appetite may take some time to return to normal and therefore you should continue to eat regular meals, including snacks when you go home.

If you have a problem or concern that is not addressed in this leaflet, then do not hesitate to contact a member of your team or the ward sister for advice whilst you are an inpatient or once you are at home. You can do this by phoning the contact numbers below:

Advanced Nurse Practitioners: 01633 234779

Stoma Nurses: 01633 234114

Ward Sister D3 East: 01633 234036/234037

Ward visiting times on D3 East

Afternoon: 15:00 – 17:00

Evening: 19:00 – 20:00

**This document is available in Welsh /
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg**