

Breast Care Unit

Patient Information Leaflet (PL)

Admission and discharge



The aim of this leaflet is to support the information given to you by the Breast Care Nurse about your stay in hospital and discharge home.

Admission

You will be admitted to the Day Surgery Unit or the Same Day Admission Unit on the day of your surgery. You will be visited by the surgeon and anaesthetist. The surgeon will explain the procedure, ask you to sign a consent form and mark the area for surgery.

Discharge

You will either be able to go home on the day of surgery or the day after depending on your recovery. You will recover from your surgery quicker at home than in hospital.

Your wound

Your wounds from surgery will be closed with stitches that dissolve with glue on top. The stitches do not need to be removed. You can have a shower the day following your surgery. Please observe your wound for redness, swelling and increased pain. Contact the Breast Care Nurses if you have any concerns. You may also have a wound drain in place following surgery. You will be shown how to look after the drain and change it, if necessary, by the nursing staff.

You will be given a spare bottle upon discharge home and a bag to carry the drain in. The Breast Care Nurses will arrange to see you in the Breast Care Unit to monitor the drain and remove it when required. Please monitor the green vacuum indicator at regular intervals, as this keeps the drain working and should always be pressed together and not expanded. The drain will not work adequately if the green vacuum indicator "pops up" and it may require changing. If you have concerns or questions about the drain or your wound, please do not hesitate to contact the Breast Care Nurses.

The Breast Care Nurse may telephone you at home following discharge and will arrange to see you in the Breast Care Unit if required.

Pain relief

We may provide you a small supply of pain killers if required. Please ensure you have adequate supply at home and to contact your GP if pain persists.

Results Appointment

Two weeks after surgery you will have an appointment at the 'Results Clinic'. You may not wish to commit yourself to returning to work until after this appointment in case further treatment such as chemotherapy and radiotherapy is necessary.

Driving

You are advised not to drive for 2 weeks following surgery, depending on your recovery.

After your treatment is completed

Once all your hospital treatment has finished, we may offer you “Open Access Follow Up” for 5 years. This is a new type of follow up at Milton Keynes. It replaces routine appointments with a system where patients can call us if they have a problem and don't have to come to hospital when they are feeling well.

You can telephone the Breast Care Nurses anytime with any concerns and if appropriate an appointment with the team will be arranged within 2 weeks. Alternatively, if you remain on routine follow-up, you may be discharged after 2-3 years.

Follow-Up Mammograms

You will have yearly mammograms for up to 5 years if applicable. This may be longer for younger people. National Health Service Breast Screening Programme. Anyone over the age of 70 years can self-refer. You can do this by contacting 01908 995 883.

Following this if you are aged between 50 and 70 years you will be invited to attend for routine breast screening approximately every 3 years by the Breast Screening Unit directly on 01908 995 883.

Returning to work

This very much depends on your job, and you know best what your work involves. Ask yourself: “Am I ready to return to the job required of me?”

How will I feel after my surgery?

It is quite normal for the arm, breast or chest wall to tingle and the skin to feel tight. The breastbone and ribs may feel tender for a few days. This is sometimes more obvious after the operation and can often last for some weeks or months. Pain relief medication will be advised on your discharge from hospital.

***If you have severe pain, see your GP.**

Rest between tasks; gradually increase your daily activities as you feel able. Regular rest at first may be necessary. **Do not lift heavy loads with the affected arm for 2-3 months after surgery e.g., shopping.**

You will be given information relating to arm exercises, It is important to continue with these exercises as advised by the Breast Care Nurse.

Hormone Treatment

If you suffer with any side effects and need further advice, speak to your family doctor or Breast Care Nurses. You will be eligible to receive free prescriptions for this treatment. After any breast surgery you can feel very emotional, and you may need support. You can seek help with this i.e., Professional or a Support Group.

Please find below some contacts which might prove useful:

Breast Care Nurses are available between 0830 and 1630 Mon – Fri: 01908 996 924.

Your GP Practice – these times may vary.

Outside of these hours you can contact:

Ward 24 01908 996 991

The Emergency surgical clinic 01908 996 426. Mon-Fri 0800-1900 weekends and BH 0900-1900

Urgent Care Centre 01908 303 030

Accident and Emergency switchboard 01908 660 033

Useful Contacts:

Macmillan Information & Support 01908 660 033

Local Support Group: Bosom Pals – 01908 610 598

www.wereinthepink.org.uk

Breast Cancer Care – 0808 800 6000

We ask for information about you so that you can receive proper care and treatment. This information remains confidential and is stored securely by the Trust in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018/GDPR. Further guidance can be found within our privacy notice found on our Trust website: www.mkuh.nhs.uk

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