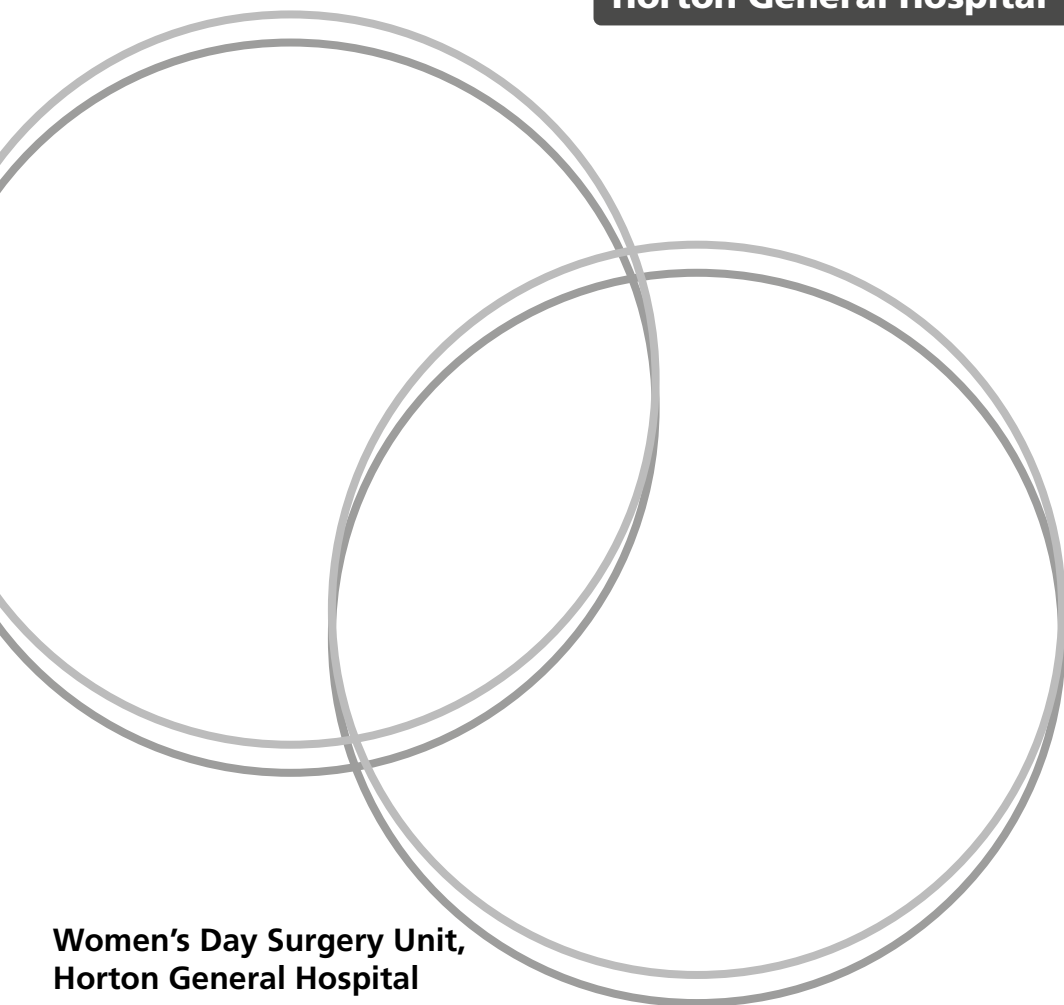




Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Gynaecology – Information and advice after a surgical procedure under general anaesthetic

Horton General Hospital



**Women's Day Surgery Unit,
Horton General Hospital**

This advice is intended as a general guide. Everyone is different. You may also receive additional information, which is more specific to you, to aid your recovery.

For up to 48 hours after your anaesthetic, you must follow the information contained in this leaflet. This is due to your reduced reflexes, reasoning and co-ordination skills may be impaired despite you feeling well as a result of the general anaesthetic.

For 24 hours after your operation:

- Arrange to have someone with you for the first night following your operation.
- Do not lock the bathroom door or make yourself inaccessible to the person looking after you.
- Do not operate machinery or appliances i.e., a cooker, kettle.
- Eat a balanced diet. Drink plenty of fluids to avoid constipation. By eating a healthy diet, you will help to improve the healing process.
- Do not make any important decisions or sign legal/important documents.
- Be aware of using social media over the next 24 hours, as you may not be fully aware of what you are posting.
- Do not take any medication to help you sleep as this could interact with the anaesthetic already in your body.
- Please consider If you need help to look after any children or pets that you have.
- Please take regular pain relief (e.g., Paracetamol, Ibuprofen) if required.

Driving

The DVLA states that you must not drive a car or any other vehicle, including bicycles, for 48 hours after your general anaesthetic. After this time, you need to think about whether your pain or wounds may affect your ability to drive safely. We suggest that you get into your car while it is still parked to see whether it is comfortable. One way to tell if you will be able to drive safely is if you are able to perform an emergency stop comfortably and quickly. We also advise checking with your insurance agency that you are adequately insured to start driving again.

General signs to look out for

Please contact if you have any problems overnight or in the next 72 hours, such as:

- New/fresh or increased bleeding.
- Any offensive smelling or discoloured discharge.
- Pain not controlled with pain relief medication.
- Nausea or vomiting that prevents you from keeping fluid down.
- Signs of an infection such; feeling feverish or unwell, any pain or swelling at operation site, offensive discharge.
- Signs of DVT such as pain or swelling in your legs, shortness of breath.

We are always happy to discuss any concerns you have with you over the phone. Please be aware that we may direct you to the most appropriate service, which could be, your GP, Emergency Department, an outpatient clinic or assessment until after 72 hours after discharge.

Many patients will not require a follow-up appointment but if follow-up is recommended by your surgical team, an appointment will be sent you your home address. If you are expecting a follow-up appointment and you have not received a letter in the post, please contact the ward on the numbers provided.

Pain relief at home – a guide to your painkillers and how to take them

It is natural to experience some degree of tummy pain after this type of procedure. You may also experience some discomfort in your shoulder or sternum (breastbone). This is because of the gas used in your tummy during your operation. This type of pain usually disappears after a few hours.

You may have been given more than one type of painkillers to take home with you. This is because each type of painkiller works in the different way to help relieve your pain. The types of painkillers are:

- Paracetamol
- An anti-inflammatory, for example, Diclofenac or Ibuprofen
- A Morphine based painkiller, for example, Codeine Phosphate, Tramadol

It is safe to take the different types of painkillers together or at different times of the day. The following section will help you choose which painkiller to take according to the severity of the pain.

Mild Pain

Take your Paracetamol regularly as prescribed on the prescription label. Do not take more than 8 tablets in 24 hours.

Moderate Pain

Take your Paracetamol regularly and your Anti-Inflammatory painkiller as described on the prescription label.

If you have not been prescribed Anti-Inflammatory painkiller, take your Morphine based painkiller as described on the prescription label and take your Paracetamol.

You may find that you only need to take the Morphine based painkiller once or twice during the day.

Severe Pain

Take all your painkillers on a regular basis as described on the prescription labels. It may be of benefit to take your Paracetamol and Morphine based ones together and to take the Anti-Inflammatory ones 2 - 3 hours later.

The Morphine based painkiller may cause constipation. If this happens, drink plenty of fluids and increase your intake of dietary fibre.

It is to take only on 30mg of Codeine initially. If the pain ceases then you need take no further Codeine, but if the pain persists a further 30mg of Codeine may be taken.

How long will I need to take my pain killers?

As healing occurs you will feel less pain. Once your pain is controlled and is mild, you should only take Paracetamol. If your pain remains severe for more than a few days or is not relieved by your painkillers, you should contact your GP.

Never give prescribed tablets to other people as they may not be safe for them to take. Any left over painkillers should be taken to your local pharmacy for safe disposal.

Keep all medicines out of the reach of children.

Pain relief

Next due at

Paracetamol

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Ibuprofen/Diclofenac (take with food)

.....

Codeine/Tramadol

.....

How to contact us

Concerns in the first 72 hours after discharge

Horton Day Case Unit, Women's Day Surgery Unit

Horton General Hospital, Oxford Road, Banbury, OX16 9AL

Tel. **01295 229 090**

(Mondays to Friday)

Out of Hours

Gynaecology Ward

Level 1, Women's Centre, John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, OX3 9DU

Tel. **01865 222 001** or

01865 222 002

(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

If you have any concerns after 72 hours please contact your own GP out of hours service, including NHS 111.

When you need fast advice but it is not a 999 emergency, you can call this service for free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel. **111** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

Author: Horton General Hospital Ward Manager Tracy Gunter and Gynaecology Patient Information Co-ordinator

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Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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