



Northumbria Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Attending the surgical day unit for your operation

Issued by Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

building a caring future

HOSPITAL | COMMUNITY | HOME

www.northumbria.nhs.uk

Planning in advance

Let us know if you can't make it

If you are unable to attend for your appointment date it is important that you inform us as soon as possible. This will allow us to re-arrange your appointment and allocate the theatre space to another patient. Please call 0344 811 8111 to re-arrange.

Knowing what time to come in

Your session and admission time will be provided within your admission letter. You will be allocated to either a morning or an afternoon operating list and the time you are given is your admission time to the surgical day unit not the time of the operation. Your operation could be at any point during that morning or afternoon theatre session. Surgical day unit opening hours and telephone numbers are at the end of this document.

Knowing where to go

Prior to you coming in it will be helpful if you know where the unit is situated. You will find details of the location of where your operation will take place in your admission letter. There is also information about each hospital site, including directions and car parking, on the trust website under 'Our locations' (www.northumbria.nhs.uk). However, if you are still unsure please do not hesitate to contact the unit directly.

Ensure everything at home is in place

It is likely you will spend most of the day with us and so you will need to make the necessary arrangements for any home or work commitments you may have, e.g. family, pets. You may need time off work following your operation, and this will need to be planned for.

Ensure you have bought simple pain killers for after your operation

Please make sure you have paracetamol and ibuprofen (if you can take it) in stock at home before you come in to hospital. These are much cheaper bought over the counter than if you have to pay a prescription charge for them in hospital.

Aftercare

If you have had a general anaesthetic or sedation you will need a responsible adult to collect you, escort you home and to stay with you for 24 hours after your surgery (taxi drivers / public transport drivers are not classed as an escort).

Smoking

Please try to stop or cut down in the run up to your operation. This reduces the chance of you having short-term complications around the time of your surgery such as a chest infection, but also reduces your risk over the longer term of developing more serious smoking related illnesses. We do recognise that this is an anxious and stressful time for you. You cannot smoke on the ward and once admitted to the surgical day unit you should not leave the department, this includes going somewhere to smoke. Your surgery may be cancelled if this occurs.

On the day of operation

Bathe and shower

Please have a shower or a bath prior to coming in for your surgery.

Makeup

Please wear as little make-up as possible and bring a means of removing it.

Nails

Ideally, removing nail varnish is helpful for vital monitoring during your procedure. However, if you have gel nails that are hard to remove it is not necessary to do this.

Jewellery and piercings

You will be asked to remove all jewellery for your operation, other than a simple wedding band. Please avoid bringing other jewellery into hospital. If possible, please remove any body piercing items.

Shaving

It is not necessary to shave hairs away from the area to be operated on.

Food and drink

It is essential that you follow the instructions provided regarding eating and drinking on the day of your operation. It is unsafe to give you an anaesthetic or sedation if these instructions are not followed, and your operation will be cancelled. Maintaining hydration and avoiding distressing symptoms such as dry mouth is important for you while you wait, and helps with your postoperative recovery. However, food or large volumes of fluid in the stomach can be dangerous when you are under anaesthetic.

Please follow these guidelines:

General anaesthetic / IV sedation / regional anaesthesia*:

Morning list - No food after midnight.

At 6:30, please drink a glass of still water.

You may continue to drink water until your admission

Afternoon list - Light breakfast before 07:00 am. (e.g. tea and toast, no fried food).

At 11:00, please drink a glass of still water.

You may continue to drink water until your admission

Once on the surgical day unit, you will be offered water depending on your expected time of operation.

Local anaesthetic*: Eat and drink as normal, unless stated in your appointment letter.

* Many procedures can be done under local anaesthetic but require the option to give sedation or a full anaesthetic if needed. Please refer closely to your procedure appointment letter which will tell you which of these guidelines to follow.

What to bring

Medicines and allergy treatments

Take all your usual medication unless otherwise advised at your preassessment clinic appointment. This can be taken with your glass of water at 6.30am for the morning session and at your usual time in the morning if you are on the afternoon list. It is vital that you bring any medication that you are currently taking and where possible in their original packaging. Omit all herbal or complementary medicines on the day of surgery

Please inform staff of any allergies you may have and bring a list of these with you in case you forget their names.

Clothes

If you are at North Tyneside and have them, please bring a dressing gown and slippers to wear on the day unit and for walking to the operating theatre suite. This is not necessary at other sites as the day unit is attached to theatre complex. It is important that you wear comfortable, loose fitting clothing to reduce discomfort from the site of your operation, and allow for extra bulk from bandages or dressings.

Something to occupy your time

The order of patient treatment in theatre is prioritised by a surgeon and anaesthetist according to patient and theatre factors. Dependent on your place on the list, you may have a few hours free time prior to your surgery. Please feel free to bring reading materials or something similar to occupy your time.

Leave valuables at home

Please try to avoid bringing anything of significant value as the trust does not accept responsibility for any such items. Mobile phones can be used for essential calls and should be left on silent at all times.

Contact number

Please bring the contact number of whoever will be picking you up.

Arriving on the day unit

Report to reception

Upon arrival please go to the reception to be registered onto the day unit. A nurse will allocate you a bed, assist in completing the admission process and help to prepare you for surgery. The units are multi-sex wards, but your privacy and dignity will be maintained at all times.

Preparation

The nurse will take you to your bed space, fill in a checking/safety questionnaire and give you a hospital identity bracelet to wear. This has your name and details on it. If you are allergic to anything such as certain foods, medications or latex, please tell the nurse and they will give you a red bracelet. You must wear the identity bracelet all the time you are in the day surgery centre. They are an important part of our safety procedures such as checking you into theatre for your operation or ensuring you are getting the correct medicines.

The nurse may weigh you, and will take your temperature and blood pressure. You will be asked to put on a cotton hospital gown and given stockings to wear if required - these will help prevent you getting clots in your legs. Depending on the procedure you are having, you can keep your underwear on; otherwise you will be given a pair of disposable pants. Please let us know if your religion requires you to keep your head covered.

You will be asked to remove all jewellery, body piercings and contact lenses. You can keep your wedding ring on – this will be covered with tape.

Hearing aids and dentures can be worn in theatre, but we may ask you to take them out if necessary when you come to the operating theatre suite.

The nurse will double check your personal details before taking you to the operating theatre.

Ask any questions

Once admitted, you will be seen by your consultant surgeon and consultant anaesthetist or their deputies. They will assess you, explain the procedure and ask you to sign the consent form for surgery and anaesthesia. You will be able to ask any questions regarding your procedure with the consultant there to answer before signing the form.

Carers

Carers can stay during your visit if they are directly involved with your daily care, for example, if you have any disability. The carer must leave the ward while you are in theatre.

If a child under 18 is having treatment, one parent or guardian can stay with them during their visit. One parent/guardian may accompany their child into the anaesthetic room and be present whilst your child goes to sleep. The parent/guardian must leave the theatre and ward area while the child is in theatre. Please do not bring siblings to the ward.

In order to protect the privacy of other patients, relatives of adult patients who are not named carers, are usually requested to leave the ward immediately after the patient is admitted. Relatives, friends and escorts are welcome to use the waiting areas, restaurants and cafes.

After your procedure

If you had a general anaesthetic or sedation

You will be taken to the recovery area where you will be monitored and cared for while you wake up fully. Your pulse and blood pressure will be taken regularly and a recovery nurse will take over your care. We will ensure that any symptoms following surgery and anaesthesia are controlled and your recovery optimised to allow for transfer back to the surgical day unit. You will be given water to drink in recovery before being sent back to surgical day unit. Once back on the surgical day unit you will be able to have a hot drink and toast/biscuits before going home. How long it takes to recover varies. It could take anywhere between one to six hours. The nurse will advise you when it is safe for you to leave.

If you had a local anaesthetic or block with no sedation

You will be taken back to the ward area. You will be offered a hot drink and toast/biscuits before going home.

Admission to hospital

Rarely, you may require overnight stay because you need help managing pain, sickness or because of unexpected problems during your procedure. If you have had a general surgical or gynaecological operation at Wansbeck hospital and you need to be admitted overnight, you will be transferred to another hospital site by ambulance as there are no inpatient surgical beds in Wansbeck hospital.

Getting home

Your discharge time will depend on your time of surgery, its duration and your fitness afterwards.

Arrange for an adult to collect or accompany you home

Once discharged from the surgical day unit, it is essential that all patients are accompanied by an adult able to remain with them, and be responsible for them for 24 hours after discharge. Even if you are having a local anaesthetic it is recommended to have someone to take you home. Please have the contact number of the responsible person who will be taking you home so that we can contact them if necessary.

Medication, including pain relief

Painkillers may be given before, during or after your operation. These may be by tablet, suppository or injection. It is essential to have suitable painkillers at home to help maintain your comfort. You should buy simple painkillers such as Paracetamol and Ibuprofen (if tolerated), before you come in for your operation. You may be given stronger pain killers to take home with you, and provided with information about how to take these. Any medication given to you in hospital will be charged at the cost of a pharmacy prescription. Money will not be collected at the time, but you need to sign for it and pay later

If we prescribe you any tablets or medicines, we usually give you enough for three to seven days. If you need to continue treatment, we will advise you to visit your GP to arrange this. The letter to your GP will contain details of the medications we have given to you.

Sick note

If you require a sick note, please ask the surgical day unit nurses when admitted so that this can be processed by the doctors

Post-operative care once discharged

We will send you and your GP copies of your discharge letter which will have details about your procedure. You will be given written discharge advice to take home with you after your procedure. If you or your relatives or carers have any questions before you leave for home, please speak to one of our nurses.

When you get home

You may feel tired, so only do as much as you feel able. Please follow the specific advice we give you about taking your prescribed medication, including painkillers, and post-operative physiotherapy exercises.

If you had a general anaesthetic

- do not use machinery or drive a car for the first 48 hours – please note that the nature of your operation may mean that this period is much longer.
- drink plenty of fluids and eat light meals but do not drink any alcohol for at least 24 hours.
- do not make any important decisions or sign any contracts for at least 24 hours.

In the first 24 hours, your carer needs to:

- take you home by car or taxi, not public transport.
- stay with you for 24 hours in yours or their home.
- help you with household activities, such as cooking and cleaning.
- give you plenty of fluids to drink but no alcohol.
- help you with washing/bathing and getting dressed.
- make sure you take painkillers regularly, as prescribed/advised.
- run errands for you.

If you have had a local anaesthetic

As long as you have not had any sedation, you do not require an escort home or supervision.

- we will advise you when it is safe to drive a car or use machinery, and when it is safe to start drinking alcohol.
- drink plenty of fluids and eat light meals.

Follow up outpatient appointment

If you need an outpatient appointment after your procedure, this will be arranged and you will receive an appointment date and time in the post.

If you have any queries, or seek any advice before or after your day surgery please do not hesitate to call the day unit you were admitted to.

If you need simple advice that cannot wait until the day units are open then please contact the appropriate ward.

General Surgery /Gynaecology
Ward 7
North Tyneside General Hospital
0191 2934364

Orthopaedics
Ward 10
Wansbeck General Hospital
01670 564137

North Tyneside General Hospital

Rake Lane, North Shields, NE29 8NH
Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 8pm
0191 2932548

Wansbeck General Hospital

Woodhorn Lane, Ashington, NE63 9JJ
Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 8pm
01670 564169

Hexham General Hospital

Corbridge Road, Hexham, NE46 1QJ
Monday to Friday, 7:45 am - 8pm
01434 655317

Alnwick Infirmary

South Road, Alnwick, NE66 2NS
Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 8pm
01665 626791

Use this QR code for more information on nerve blocks for surgery on upper or lower limbs (PIN 567)



Use this QR code for more information on pain relief after day surgery (PIN143)

Alternative Formats

If you would like a copy of this information in large print, another language, audio tape or other format please call the Contact Centre on 03 44 811 8118.

Other sources of information

NHS 111

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx

NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)

www.nice.org.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Freephone: 0800 032 0202

Text: 07815 500015

Email: northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk

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General Enquiries 03 44 811 8111

www.northumbria.nhs.uk

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