



Hampshire Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Having elective (planned) surgery under a general anaesthetic

**Information for patients,
relatives and carers**

Patient initials:

Hospital number:

Pre-assessment nurse:

Operation:

Destination:

Arrival time:

Pre-assessment clinic

(Andover, Basingstoke, Winchester)

[01256 486799](tel:01256486799)

Your consultant, or a member of their team, has added your name to their waiting list for an operation. This booklet has been provided to help answer common questions about having elective (planned) surgery while you sleep under a general anaesthetic.

Pre-operative questionnaire

We ask all patients having surgery to complete a questionnaire online. At Hampshire Hospitals, we use a secure web-based system called **Synopsis Home** for our pre-operative health questionnaires.

You can either type www.synopsishome.com/registration into your browser or use the camera on your smartphone to scan the QR code below. This will start the registration process.



If you have difficulties accessing Synopsis Home or completing the questionnaire, please contact us as below. We are available Monday to Friday, from 9am to 4pm.

Email: PreAssessmentHub@hhft.nhs.uk

Telephone: [01256 486799](tel:01256486799) option 2

Pre-assessment appointments and tests

We may ask you to attend a face-to-face or telephone anaesthetic pre-assessment clinic appointment. This will depend on the type of operation you will be having and your pre-operative questionnaire.

Please feel free to ask for a chaperone at any of your appointments. We will make sure that you have someone independent to support you.

We may need to arrange for you to have blood or urine tests, swabs to check for MRSA and so on. Please note that some tests will need to be repeated if you do not have your surgery within three months.

If you are having a 'group and save' or G + S (a two-part blood test to find out your blood type), you will need to have the second part of the test up to five days before your operation.

If your nurse asks you to book a blood test, telephone the phlebotomy department on 01256 314751.

Alternatively, you can book online by using the camera on your smartphone to scan the QR code below.



For some urology patients, a urine sample will need to be sent to test for bacteria.

You may also need to see a consultant anaesthetist to check that you are medically fit for surgery and a general anaesthetic.

Nurse-led anaesthetic pre-assessment appointment

If we ask you to attend the pre-assessment clinic, this will be either in person or by telephone.

Please **have a list of all your medications with you**, including those prescribed by your doctor and any that you buy over the counter, such as supplements and homeopathic remedies.

We may ask you to stop taking some of your medications before your operation, using the chart in this booklet.

A nurse will ask you about current and previous medical conditions and operations that you have had.

As some medical conditions can affect recovery after surgery, it is important to make sure that they are under control before your operation.

If you are having a urology procedure and have provided a urine sample

As part of the pre-operative process, we will test your urine for bacteria.

If bacteria is present, the hospital pharmacy or your GP will ask you to collect a course of antibiotics. Instructions on how and when to take them will be provided. Even if the bacteria is not causing you symptoms, we would still like you to take antibiotics to help reduce the risk of any surgical complications.

If you are given antibiotics to take before surgery, please bring them with you on the day of your operation.

If, in the week before your operation, your urine becomes cloudy, milky-looking, or unusually smelly, please contact the urology department for advice by telephone on [01962 824874](tel:01962824874) or via email at urologyadmin@hhft.nhs.uk

Is there anything I should do to prepare for surgery?

While you are on the waiting list

You can help reduce your risk of chest infection and other possible complications after your operation by being as medically fit as possible.

- ✓ **If you smoke**, please try to stop. Contact Smokefree Hampshire for support on 01264 563039 or 0800 772 3649.
- ✓ Aim to be a **healthy weight** (BMI between 18.5 and 24.9).
- ✓ Make sure you are as **physically fit** as possible, as this will help your recovery after your surgery.
- ✓ Try to have a healthy **blood pressure**, ideally lower than 140/90.
- ✓ **If you drink alcohol**, have no more than 14 units a week, and **avoid taking recreational drugs**. For support with alcohol and drug use, contact Inclusion Recovery Hampshire via their website at inclusionhants.org

For details on how to prevent blood clots during your hospital stay, please visit our website at <https://bit.ly/4l7xPfQ> or use the camera on your smartphone to scan the QR code below.



For further information about **preparing for surgery**, visit the Royal College of Anaesthetists' website at <https://bit.ly/40yFA5a> or use the camera on your smartphone to scan the QR code below.



It is normal to feel nervous about having an operation under general anaesthetic.

For helpful tips and resources, visit the Royal College of Anaesthetists' website at <https://bit.ly/3sw4OVb> or use the camera on your smartphone to scan the QR code below.



When you have a date for surgery

Arrange for a responsible adult to collect you from hospital after your operation and to stay with you for 24 hours.

Please note that because you will be having a general anaesthetic, you will not be able to drive or travel on public transport for 24 hours after surgery.

If you are diabetic

Follow the instructions we gave you about your medication at your pre-assessment appointment. If you have any queries or concerns about it, please telephone the pre-assessment department on 01256 486799.

On the day of your operation

- ✓ Bring all of your usual medication to the hospital with you.
- ✓ Make sure that you have a sugar-containing drink (such as Lucozade) or glucose tablets with you in case of a hypo on your way to the hospital.
- ✓ If you feel 'hypo' on your journey, please have your drink or glucose tablet and tell the nursing staff when you arrive.
- ✓ We will check your blood sugar level when booking you in. If it is out of range and/or you have an infection, we may have to cancel your operation and send you home.

After your operation

We will check your blood sugar level and give you something to eat and drink. We may give you your diabetic medications at this time if it is safe to do so.

We will check your blood sugar level again after you have eaten. It is important that we know you can eat and drink before we discharge you home.

When you get back home

Check your blood sugar level. You may find that results are slightly higher or lower than usual. This will normally settle down over the next day or two.

We expect that you will be able to eat and drink as normal after you get home and take your usual diabetic medication.

Medication

If we have advised you to stop taking any of your medication before your operation, please use the chart below to record it.

Please note that if you do not stop the medication as requested, it is very likely that we will cancel your operation on the day.

Guidelines for stopping medications before surgery

Date of operation:

Medication	Day before admission	Day of surgery AM/PM

Guidelines for stopping medications before surgery

Date of operation:

Medication	Day before admission	Day of surgery AM/PM

If your operation is cancelled or rearranged for another date, please take all of your prescribed medication as usual. When you have a new date for surgery, the pre-assessment team will contact you to discuss arrangements for stopping your medication as before. If you do not hear from the team, please contact them on **01256 486799** for advice.

If you live outside of Hampshire Hospitals' catchment area

You and a relative/friend can book an overnight stay within the hospital grounds. Please telephone Viridian Accommodation on 01256 357927 for further information and to make a booking.

On the day before your operation

- ✗ Do not smoke, drink alcohol, or take recreational drugs.
- ✓ Remove any nail polish from your fingers and/or toes, including false/gel/acrylic nails.
- ✓ Make sure that you have arranged a responsible adult to take you home by private car or taxi after surgery, and to stay with you for the first 24 hours.
- ✓ Follow the instructions below on when to stop eating and drinking.

Make sure you have a supply of over-the-counter **pain relief** (such as paracetamol, ibuprofen, or co-codamol) at home for after your operation. Speak to your local pharmacist about what would be most suitable for you.

On the day of surgery

- ✓ Have a bath or shower.
- ✓ Take any regular medications as normal (except for those we have asked you to stop), with a small sip of water if necessary.
- ✗ Do not shave the area to be operated on.
- ✗ Do not wear make-up, including false eyelashes.
- ✗ Do not wear any jewellery, including watches and facial/body piercings.

What to bring with you

- ✓ Any drugs or medications you are taking, ideally in the original packaging.
- ✓ A bottle of water, so that you can continue to have sips of water until you go to the operating theatre.
- ✓ Slippers with non-slip soles and a dressing gown.
- ✓ Something to read or listen to.

- ✓ A small bag containing a change of clothes, nightwear, toiletries and so on in case you need to stay overnight in hospital.

Please leave your valuables at home.

When should I stop eating and drinking?

If your operation is in the morning:

- ✓ **From midnight** on the day of your surgery, please have **nothing to eat** (including chewing gum and sweets) **or drink, except water**.
- ✓ You will be able to have sips of water until you go to the operating theatre.

If your operation is in the afternoon or evening:

- ✓ Before 7am on the day of your surgery, please have a light breakfast of cereal or toast.
- ✓ **After 7am**, please have **nothing to eat** (including chewing gum and sweets) and **or drink, except water**
- ✓ You will be able to have sips of water until you go to the operating theatre.

Please note: if you do not stop eating and drinking when asked to do so, we may need to delay or cancel your operation on the day.

What should I do if my health changes before my surgery?

Please contact the pre-assessment team for advice on **01256 486799** (**option 2**) as soon as possible. It is very important that we know of any changes to your medical condition, medications, and new infections (such as COVID-19, chest, or urine infection).

We also need to know of any GP appointments and hospital admissions before your operation, as we may need to give you additional advice or arrange for further tests to be done.

What will happen on the day of my operation?

Please see your admission letter for details of where to go on the day and what time to arrive.

Please arrive on time and book in with the receptionist. A nurse will show you to a private area and ask you to change into a hospital gown. You can put on your own dressing gown over the hospital gown.

A nurse will check your details with you, place an ID band on your wrist and ask you when you last had something to eat and drink. They will also take your blood pressure, pulse, and temperature.

Your surgeon and anaesthetist will visit to confirm your consent for the operation, and to answer any questions you may have.

When it is your turn, a nurse will accompany you to the operating theatre. The surgical team will check your ID band and consent form before the anaesthetist gives you the general anaesthetic.

During your time with us, we will aim to provide a single sex area for all of our patients. However, at times such as when walking to the operating theatre, you may see patients of the opposite sex, also in dressing gowns.

What happens after my operation?

You will wake up in the recovery area, where you will stay for about 20 minutes, before going to our second stage recovery area or to the ward to continue recovering. At this point, we will contact the person escorting you home to give them an approximate time to collect you.

We will check your blood pressure, pulse, temperature (known as 'obs' or observations) and wound (if required) after 30 minutes. We will then offer you some water, followed by tea or coffee and biscuits.

When can I go home?

After about two hours, we encourage most patients to get dressed and prepare to go home. Please note that some operations can take up to six hours to recover from before patients can leave hospital.

For day surgery operations, we discharge patients home up until 11pm.

You will be able to go home when:

- ✓ Your observations (see above) are all within a normal range for you
- ✓ You are able to eat and drink
- ✓ Any pain is under control
- ✓ You are not actively vomiting
- ✓ You are able to move around as normal
- ✓ Your wound (if you have one) shows no sign of bleeding.

If you are on the surgical day case unit, we will take you to the discharge lounge to wait for your escort to arrive. We will give you full details of how to care for yourself at home, who to contact if you are worried, and whether you need to return to hospital.

Will I need to stay in hospital overnight?

The team looking after you will advise you if this is necessary. Please ask your relatives/friends to check visiting times with the ward before they come to see you.

Is there anything I need to watch out for at home?

If you notice redness, pus, increased swelling around your wound, or you have a fever or an increase in pain, please contact your GP for advice. You may have an infection and need a course of antibiotics.

It is normal to have some pain or discomfort for a few days after surgery. Taking regular pain relief (following the instructions on the packet) will help to keep you comfortable.

Please note that the hospital will not give you a supply of over-the-counter painkillers to take home after your operation. Please make sure that you have a supply of painkillers such as paracetamol, ibuprofen, or co-codamol at home ready for your return after surgery.

When can I get back to normal?

For 24 hours after your operation

- ✖ Do not smoke, drink alcohol, or take recreational drugs
- ✖ Do not drive a car or ride a scooter, motorbike, or bicycle
- ✖ Do not operate machinery, including kitchen equipment
- ✖ Do not sign any legal papers
- ✖ Do not take sleeping tablets
- ✖ Do not lock the bathroom/toilet door in case you feel faint or pass out

- ✓ Follow any special instructions given by your surgeon, anaesthetist, or nurse when they discharge you home
- ✓ Take it easy on the day of your operation
- ✓ Drink plenty of fluids and eat a light meal.

Returning to work and your usual activities

Take time off work if we have advised you to do so.

We will provide a sick note if your surgeon feels you need more than one week off work. If you do not receive one but feel you require a longer recovery period, please contact your GP.

Please consult the recovery information we have given you about your operation for details on returning to participation in sport and other activities.

Please note

If you are having orthopaedic surgery (including hip and knee joint replacement), the orthopaedic education follow-up (OEFU) physiotherapist clinics two and six weeks after surgery are exclusively held at Andover and Winchester hospitals. There are no OEFU follow up appointments at Basingstoke hospital.

Information for carers

Unfortunately, it is not possible for carers to stay with the patient before surgery, unless arrangements have been made beforehand at the pre-assessment appointment.

We suggest you return home and wait for us to contact you when we have an approximate time for you to collect the patient.

If you have not heard from the nursing team six hours after the patient's admission time, please call us for an update, using the appropriate phone number opposite.

Basingstoke patients

C3: [01256 313540](tel:01256313540)

C4: [01256 313544](tel:01256313544)

D5: [01256 313570](tel:01256313570)

DTC: [01256 313332](tel:01256313332)

Women's health unit: [01256 313583](tel:01256313583)

Winchester patients

Anthony Letchworth ward: [01962 824601](tel:01962824601)

Treatment centre: [01962 828330](tel:01962828330)

Bartlett ward: [01962 825022](tel:01962825022)

Hampshire Orthopaedic Centre

[01962 824699](tel:01962824699)

Blood tests (phlebotomy)

(Andover, Basingstoke, Winchester)
[01256 314751](tel:01256314751)

General information

Parking

Hampshire Hospitals use a number plate recognition scheme for patient/visitor parking. Car parking is limited, so please allow plenty of time to find a space.

For details of charges, please visit Hampshire Hospitals' website at <https://bit.ly/47TejwT> or use the camera on your smartphone to scan the QR code below.



Other facilities

Wheelchairs

These are available at the front entrance and need a £1 deposit.

Shops, food, and drink

For details of what is available at each of our hospital sites, visit our website at <https://bit.ly/3SO3eqU> or use the camera on your smartphone to scan the QR code below.



Chaplaincy team

Our chaplains are available to offer spiritual, religious, and emotional support to people of all faiths, as well as to those who have no religious beliefs. If you would like to speak to a chaplain, please contact them as below.

[01256 314901](tel:01256314901) (Basingstoke)

[01962 824906](tel:01962824906) (Andover and Winchester)

If you need to speak to a chaplain urgently, please ask a member of the nursing team to contact them via switchboard.

Your feedback is important to us

Comments, concerns, compliments, and complaints

If you have any comments, concerns, compliments, or complaints about your care, please let us know as soon as possible. Please speak to the nurse in charge so that we can help to resolve your concerns quickly.

PALS and complaints

You can contact the PALS and complaints team by telephone on [01256 486766](tel:01256486766) or via email at PALSandcomplaints@hhft.nhs.uk

Friends and Family Test

You can also give your feedback via the NHS Friends and Family Test by using the camera on your smartphone to scan the QR code below.



This booklet is available in other formats, including large print and Easy Read, from the PALS team.

www.hampshirehospitals.nhs.uk

Pre-assessment team
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