

# Information for patients and carers

## Discharge Advice

### Following a Spinal Anaesthetic



## Information for patients

You have been given this leaflet because you have received a spinal anaesthetic at the time of your operation.

Serious complications from these procedures are rare (1 in 10,000) and the anaesthetist will have discussed the risks with you beforehand. However, because the procedures involve injections close to the spine, a collection of pus or a blood clot can cause pressure on the spinal cord. In the unlikely event that there is pressure on the spinal cord it is crucial to diagnose and treat it as quickly as possible. This must be done by specialist doctors to prevent delays in treatment and long-lasting damage.

## Post procedure assessment

You will be reviewed after your surgery and prior to discharge. This is most likely to be by the nursing and medical staff on the ward. Often you will also be seen by the anaesthetist who looked after you on the day of surgery, however, this is not always possible.

This is to check whether you have a headache or any remaining numbness or weakness of your legs. It is important to remember that some operations can cause altered sensation in the legs, therefore any changes experienced may be as a result of the surgery and not the spinal.

If you do have altered sensation, please do discuss it with your surgical team so that we can try to establish the reason.

## After discharge

When you go home it is important that you contact the ward if you experience any of the following signs/symptoms:

- Redness, pus, tenderness or pain at the spinal wound sit

- Feeling generally unwell despite the fact all seems to be well with the surgical wound
- High temperature, neck stiffness, headache
- Numbness and/or weakness in your legs/inability to weight bear
- Difficulty passing water/inability to control your bowel movements
- Severe headache that is worse when you are standing and less intense when you lie down or headache associated with ringing in ears, hearing change, deafness, or photophobia (unable to tolerate light)

Please contact the ward that you were discharged from immediately and they will advise you about returning to the hospital for assessment.

The hospital telephone numbers are: **01772 716565** (RPH)  
**01257 261222** (CDH)

Out of normal working hours there is an anaesthetist on call at Royal Preston Hospital for advice in an emergency. The on call out of hours GP doctor service should be contacted and they may liaise with the anaesthetist.

## Sources of further information

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk)

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

[www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)

[www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/veteran-aware](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/veteran-aware)

<https://bepartofresearch.nihr.ac.uk/>

[www.rcoa.ac.uk/patient-information](http://www.rcoa.ac.uk/patient-information)

All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

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If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact Smokefree Lancashire on Freephone **08081962638**

**Please ask a member of staff if you would like help in understanding this information.**  
**This information can be made available in large print, audio, Braille and in other languages.**

Our patient information group review our leaflets regularly, if you feel you would like to feedback on this information or join our reading group please contact on email address:  
[patientexperienceandinvolve@LTHTR.nhs.uk](mailto:patientexperienceandinvolve@LTHTR.nhs.uk)

**Department:** Anaesthesia

**Division:** Surgery

**Production date:** October 2025

**Review date:** October 2028

**JR 1379 v1**