



Information for
patients and
carers

Going Home following a Skull Base Craniotomy for
Meningioma.

Practical Advice.

You will be reviewed by a physiotherapist and an occupational therapist prior to your discharge from hospital to ensure that you are safe to go home. Arrange for a family member or friend to collect you.

Please ensure that you make an appointment with your GP practice nurse to arrange clip/suture removal (if necessary), as advised on your discharge summary. If you need extra support on discharge the integrated discharge team will arrange this before you go home.

Listed below are some of the most frequently asked questions following surgery. Remember that these may not all apply to you. If you have further questions, please ask.

Exercise

You can do light exercise two weeks after surgery and moderate exercise regularly in about six weeks. Avoid swimming until your wound has completely healed (usually 4-6 weeks after surgery). Avoid heavy lifting and straining for 4 weeks.

Washing wounds

You can wash the wound gently 7 days after surgery. If the wound is scabbed, these scabs should soften, lift, and fall off with regular hair washing (you can colour your hair six weeks after surgery, providing the wound is fully healed). Dressings can be removed 7 days after surgery.

Wound problems

However, if the swelling increases in size, is painful and/or leaks clear fluid or looks infected please contact your Specialist Nurse or attend Urgent Care.

Leak

You will be monitored closely while in hospital for a CSF leak (cerebrospinal fluid) from your wound, nose, or ear. Following discharge from hospital it is **unlikely** that you will develop a CSF leak. However, should you start to leak clear, salty tasting fluid from your wound, nose or ear please seek urgent advice or attend A&E.

Here is some simple advice to reduce the risk of a CSF leak:

- Avoid any activity that may raise the pressure in your head for 4 weeks e.g., prevent constipation by taking laxatives, avoid straining when opening your bowels, avoid heavy lifting, weight training

Pain/Headache/Numbness

It is common to experience pain/numbness at the incision site and in some of the surrounding cranial muscles, as these must be cut during surgery. The numbness is a result of nerves being cut. Healing of these nerves/muscles can take up to 6 months. You may also experience a clicking sound; this is common and will settle with time.

If headaches persist and are not relieved by pain killers, you have a stiff neck, are vomiting and the light hurts your eyes, please contact your specialist nurse or attend A&E.

New visual difficulties

Persistent double or blurred vision – please contact your specialist nurse or attend A&E.

Feelings

You may experience a change in your mood/emotions in the early days following your surgery. This is to be expected following a Major surgery

considering the change to your normal routine. If this persists, please discuss with a health care professional.

Sex

You may have sex when you feel ready to do so.

Flying

Travelling by plane is best avoided for 2-3 months, please confirm with your Neurosurgeon. Check with your Neurosurgeon before doing so within this period.

Driving

Please inform the DVLA that you have had surgery as your insurance will be void. They will advise when you can start driving again.

Informing your GP

A copy of your discharge summary will be forwarded to your GP electronically.

Outpatient follow-up

You will be invited for outpatient review appointments by your Surgical Team

Returning to work

You will be provided with a sicknote for 4 weeks when you are discharged (ask the nurse). However, it is usual to have approximately 3

months off work following surgery. Your GP will assess your fitness to return to work.

Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact:

Skull Base Clinical Nurse Specialist

Ward 2A, Royal Preston Hospital

PR2 9HT

Telephone: **01772 524992**

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

www.patient.co.uk

DVLA

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neurological-disorders-assessing-fitness-to-drive#benign-brain-tumours>

Telephone: 0300 790 6801 Driving license and applications.

0300 790 6806 Driving and medical issues.

It is your legal responsibility to inform the DVLA of your diagnosis and any treatments/surgery. You must not drive until the DVLA have advised you that you can.

Meningioma UK

www.meningioma.org

Telephone: 01787 374084

The Brain Tumour Charity

Support & Info line

0800 800 0004

support@thebraintumourcharity.org

Brain and Spine Foundation

Telephone: 020 7793 5900

info@brainandspine.org.uk

The British Tinnitus Association

Telephone 0800 018 527

info@tinnitus.org.uk

Minds Matter

Telephone: 01772 773 437

mindsmatter@selfhelpservices.org.uk

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

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

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If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact the Quit Squad Freephone 0800 328 6297.

Please ask if you would like help in understanding this information. This information can be made available in large print and in other languages.

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