

Managing your pain at home after lung surgery





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This leaflet is a general guide to managing your pain at home after lung surgery. It does not replace the need for personal advice from a healthcare professional. Please ask us if you have any questions.

Why do I need to take pain medicine at home?

Even though you are ready to leave hospital, it will still take some time to fully recover from your lung operation. It usually takes a few weeks after your operation to get to a stage where you can return to your normal daily activities. It is easier to get to this stage if you can manage your pain while recovering at home.

When will I receive my discharge pain medicine?

Before you leave the ward, your nurse and the pharmacist will discuss your medicine with you. They will let you know how and when to take your medicine and answer any questions you may have.

We will give you a week's supply of medicine before you leave the hospital.

You will have to see your GP within the first week to get a new prescription. This is a good opportunity to talk to your GP about pain relief and ask for more advice, if needed.


When should I take my medicine?

You should take the pain medicine at regular times and not just when you have pain. For example, if you are prescribed pain medicine that can be taken four times a day, you should take it at breakfast time, around lunchtime, in the early evening and before you go to bed. Taking your medicine at regular times will provide you with the best pain relief possible.

Important points about your medicine

Always read the information sheet inside the pack.

Do not take more than one medicine containing paracetamol at any one time.



Please be aware that paracetamol is present in a number of pain medicines, such as co-dydramol and co-codamol. If you are unsure whether a medicine contains paracetamol, please ask your pharmacist or GP.

If you are given an anti-inflammatory medicine, such as ibuprofen, naproxen or diclofenac, it is important that you remember the following:

- Only take it for five days, unless prescribed otherwise.
- Drink plenty of fluids and avoid alcohol to prevent dehydration.
- Always take it with or after food.
- If you experience shortness of breath, facial swelling, unexplained bruising, stomach pains, indigestion, heartburn, blood in vomit or blood in your poo (stools), stop taking this medicine immediately and see your doctor.

Can I drive while taking medicine prescribed for pain?

Yes, but only if your ability to drive is not impaired (affected). Medicine prescribed to help manage pain may cause side effects such as dizziness or sleepiness which may impair your driving. It is your responsibility to decide whether your driving is, or may be impaired.

What symptoms may mean I cannot drive safely?

Do not drive if you experience symptoms that may impair your driving. Symptoms may include sleepiness, poor coordination, impaired or slow thinking, dizziness or visual problems. These symptoms may occur as side effects of the medicine you are taking.

Any pain you have may also affect your sleep, concentration and impair physical function.

For how long will I need to take regular pain medicine?

Each patient is different, but we expect you will need to take regular pain medicine for at least the first four weeks after you leave the hospital.

Pain may last for weeks or months after surgery. If you experience any unusual feelings like burning or shooting pain speak to your GP.

This may be nerve (neuropathic) pain. There are specific medicines that can help treat this.

What should I do if the medicine is not helping me to manage my pain?

If you are taking pain medicine regularly but it is not helping you to manage your pain, please make an appointment to see your GP. He or she can discuss your pain with you and may suggest other medicine.

Safe storage

To prevent harm to others, always lock pain medicines safely away. Keep medicines out of sight and reach of children and pets at all times. Take expired and unused medicines to your local pharmacy for safe disposal.



What is the most common side effect of pain medicine?

The most common side effect of pain medicine is constipation. You may need to take a medicine called a laxative to soften your poo (stools) and keep your bowel functions regular. Most people should take laxatives until they stop taking regular pain medicine. We will prescribe laxatives for you when you leave hospital and explain when you need to take them. Please ask if you have any questions.

Eating high fibre foods will also help with regular bowel functions. Try to eat fruit and vegetables, wholemeal cereals and bread, and beans and pulses. However, try to avoid eating large amounts of bran as this can increase the risk of constipation. Drinking fluid helps to prevent constipation. You should aim to drink plenty of fluids.

If you have a poor appetite, you may find it hard to eat foods that are high in fibre. If you are losing weight due to your lack of appetite, contact your GP who will be able to help.

Who should I contact if I would like to talk about the side effects?

If you have any problems or concerns such as constipation, feeling sick (nausea) or being sick (vomiting), please contact your GP. Anti-sickness medicine and a change of laxatives may help to relieve these problems.

How do I stop my pain medicine?

Even if you are feeling better, it is important that you do not suddenly stop taking your pain medicine as this may cause your pain to return. To help prevent this, you should reduce your dose gradually when you are:

- Nearly back to a normal level of activity.

- Comfortable – experiencing minimal pain or discomfort while resting and during exercise.
- No longer need extra medicine between your regular doses.

It is usually best to reduce the strongest pain medicine (such as tramadol, morphine or oxycodone) first. Please only reduce your medicine once a week and only reduce one medicine at a time.

If you start reducing your medicine but find this is not helping you to manage your pain, return to your original dose and try to reduce it again after a while.

Contact information

If you have any questions, please contact the pain management team.

Harefield Hospital

Tel: **0330 12 88121** extension **85538** or ask the operator for **bleep 6165** or **6144** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

Royal Brompton Hospital

Tel: **0330 12 88121** extension **82408** or ask the operator for **bleep 7037** or **7064** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

Pain management service: www.rbht.nhs.uk/pain-management

If you have concerns about any aspect of the service you have received in hospital and feel unable to talk to those people responsible for your care, call the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on:

- Royal Brompton Hospital – 020 7349 7715
- Harefield Hospital – 01895 826 572

You can also email pals@rbht.nhs.uk. This is a confidential service.

Royal Brompton Hospital
Sydney Street
London
SW3 6NP
Tel: 0330 12 88121

Harefield Hospital
Hill End Road
Harefield
Middlesex
UB9 6JH
Tel: 0330 12 88121

Website: www.rbht.nhs.uk

Royal Brompton and Harefield hospitals are part of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على ترجمة فورية لمضمون هذه الوثيقة إلى اللغة العربية، يرجى منك الاتصال بأحد مستخدمينا بجناح المصلحة التي يتم فيها استشفائك. أحد موظفينا سيسعى لترتيب إجراءات الترجمة وإتمامها في الوقت المناسب لك.

Brosurteki bilginin Türkçe tercemesi için tedavi görüyor olduğunuz bölüme bas vurunuz. Bölüm personeli tercemenin gerçekleşmesini en kısa zamanda ayarlayacaktır.

