



Laparoscopic (keyhole) procedures: aftercare advice

Information for patients from Day Surgery

You have had laparoscopic surgery. This leaflet explains the following.

- What you need to do when you get home.
- How to manage any pain.
- How to care for your wounds.
- When you can resume normal activities, such as eating, drinking, and returning to work.

We hope this leaflet answers some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of your healthcare team.

When you get home and for the first few days after your surgery

- Arrange for someone to collect you from hospital and look after you for the first 24 hours.
- You must rest for 24 to 48 hours after your operation.
- If you have had a general anaesthetic, do not drink alcohol, smoke, or take sleeping tablets for 24 hours after your operation.
- If you have had a general anaesthetic, do not drive, cook, or operate any machinery for 24 to 48 hours after your operation.

Will I be in pain after surgery?

- You may have some discomfort or pain in your abdomen (stomach), and possibly in your neck, chest, or shoulder as well. This is caused by the carbon dioxide, which was put inside your abdomen during your surgery. This is called 'referred pain'.

The carbon dioxide is released at the end of surgery, but some can get trapped under your rib cage. This causes referred pain or discomfort. This should wear off within 2 to 3 days.

- If you feel pain, take the painkillers the hospital may have prescribed for you. If you were not prescribed painkillers, take over-the-counter painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen.
- If your pain is not controlled by painkillers, contact Day Surgery on one of the phone numbers listed below.

When can I eat and drink again?

You may drink and eat when you get home, as long as you do not feel sick. Start with small drinks (not alcohol) and a light snack. If you are thirsty, drink (not alcohol) as much as you need.

How do I care for my wounds?

- The small cuts in your abdomen may have been closed with **dissolvable stitches**. These will dissolve on their own within 2 weeks.
- If **steri-strips** only are used, they usually fall off on their own around 5 days after your surgery. If after 5 days they are still in place, remove them yourself. They can be soaked off in the bath.
- Alternatively, you may have had **non-dissolvable stitches**. Your nurse will tell you before you leave hospital when these stitches need to be removed.
- You can have a **shower** 24 hours after your surgery, and a **bath** after 5 days. Do not use scented bubble baths or shower gels, as these may cause stinging.
- **If your wounds become red with a throbbing pain, contact Day Surgery on one of the numbers listed below.**
- If you had a **gynaecological procedure**, you may have slight vaginal staining for a few days.

When can I resume my normal activities?

- Rest for the first week after your surgery.
- Where appropriate, the ward will give you a Fitness to Work certificate with your discharge letter. Please give the certificate to your employer.
- If you feel well enough, you can return to work after 5 to 7 days.
- You can have sex again when you feel comfortable to do so.

Will I need a follow-up appointment?

Some patients have a follow-up appointment. Whether you have an appointment depends on:

- what surgery you have had
- what your surgeon found during your surgery, or
- whether your surgeon needs to see you again.

What do I do if I feel unwell at home?

If you feel unwell, contact your GP immediately or one of the Day Surgery units listed below.

- Canterbury Day Surgery Centre, **Kent and Canterbury Hospital**, Canterbury
Telephone: 01227 783114 (7am to 8pm)
- Day Surgery, **Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother (QEQM) Hospital**, Margate
Telephone: 01843 234499 (Monday to Friday 7am to 9pm)
Telephone: 07887 651162 (Monday to Friday 9pm to 7am) (Bank Holidays and weekends, 24 hours a day)
- Channel Day Surgery, **William Harvey Hospital**, Ashford
Telephone: 01233 616263 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

What do you think of this leaflet?

We welcome feedback, whether positive or negative, as it helps us to improve our care and services.

If you would like to give us feedback about this leaflet, please fill in our short online survey. Either scan the QR code below, or use the web link. We do not record your personal information, unless you provide contact details and would like to talk to us some more.

Giving feedback about this leaflet



<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/MDOBU4/>

If you would rather talk to someone instead of filling in a survey, please call the Patient Voice Team.

- **Patient Voice Team**
Telephone: 01227 868605
Email (ekhuft.patientvoice@nhs.net)

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.

Please let us know:

- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

You can let us know this by:

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email (ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net).

Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient information leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals' web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patient-information>).

Reference number: Web 493

First published:
August 2020

Last reviewed:
May 2025

Next review date:
September 2028

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