

# Coming into Hospital



# Welcome

**We are delighted to welcome you as a patient to Parkside Hospital.**

We recognise that for most people coming into hospital can be a daunting experience. However, please be assured that we are committed to making your stay at Parkside Hospital as relaxed and comfortable as possible.

This booklet has been designed to provide you with all the practical information you will need for your stay with us.

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World class care  
in the comfort of  
your community

# Preparing for your visit



## **Before your visit**

Before you come into hospital for treatment, it is vital that you follow any individual instructions given in your personal confirmation letter. For example, you may be required to refrain from eating and/or drinking prior to your operation.

If you take regular medication early in the morning, please ask your consultant whether you should take it on the day of your operation. Please also observe any directions regarding X-rays, blood tests or other tests before admission.

You will have received a pre-admission form, which should be completed and returned to us **before your stay** in the pre-paid envelope provided. However, should your admission date be within the next few days, please bring the form with you and hand it to the Patient Liaison Officer. Please ensure you return the form as your surgery may have to be cancelled if it is not received.

## **Medical Insurance?**

Are you paying for your treatment with private medical insurance? If so, it is essential that you have checked the terms and conditions of your policy and obtained authorisation from your insurers prior to admission.

Your insurer will issue you with an authorisation number or authorised claim form, which you must bring with you when you come into hospital. In the event that you have treatment and your insurer refuses to pay for the treatment, you will be liable for the charges incurred. We can often arrange direct payment for patients covered by medical insurance.



## Self-paying patient?

Should your admission be self-funded, either on a package or deposit basis, you will be required to pay all hospital fees 48 hours prior to admission. Payment by personal cheque should be no later than 7 working days prior to admission. Payment can be made by credit or debit card, credit transfer or bankers draft.

## Any questions?

If you have any questions or specific requirements including dietary needs, please do not hesitate to speak to our **Admissions Department** on **020 8971 8012** prior to admission.

## What to bring with you

Sometimes the process of undergoing surgery can reduce your temperature. Therefore, although the hospital is warm, we would recommend that you bring warm clothing as well as the following items:

- Nightwear, dressing gown and slippers
- Casual clothing to wear towards the end of your recuperation, or during any post-operative physiotherapy
- Personal toiletries (items such as towels will be provided)
- Books or magazines to read during your stay
- Phones and laptops etc. may be brought with you, but you must supply your own chargers
- Any medication you are currently taking in the original labelled containers
- Any relevant X-rays you may have
- Your completed admission form, pre-admission health questionnaire and insurance documentation, if applicable

## Pre-admission clinic

We have a pre-admission clinic for some patients who will be undergoing major surgery, e.g. joint replacements. If this applies to you, it will provide you with the opportunity for a discussion about your treatment prior to coming to hospital to for your procedure.

## Getting to Parkside and back

Patients are usually advised not to drive for a period of time after surgery, therefore we suggest that you arrange for a relative or friend to drop you off at the hospital and collect you again on your departure.

There is disabled access to the hospital. Parkside Hospital fully complies with the Disability Discrimination Act.

## Valuables

We strongly recommend that you do not bring any valuables, jewellery, large amounts of cash, credit cards or a cheque book. If this is unavoidable, there is a safe in your bedroom which is available for your personal use. Please note however, the hospital cannot accept any responsibility for valuables kept on the premises.



# On the day

## Arrival

**Your time of arrival will have been confirmed in your admission letter.**

Whilst your time of admission does not always determine the time of your operation, it is important that you arrive on time.

This is because your consultant and anaesthetist will want to meet you **before** your operation. So, for this reason, please be aware that you may wait for a little while prior to going for your surgery.

On arrival, please report to reception. We will confirm your admission details, but please remind us of any specific dietary or religious requirements. We will then show you to your room where you will be familiarised with the facilities. Then just settle in and make yourself comfortable.



# During your stay

Meals and drinks are usually served at the following times:  
**Breakfast 8am – Morning coffee 10am**  
**Lunch 12.30pm – Afternoon tea 3pm**  
**Dinner 6pm – Night-time drink 9pm**

## Your room

All inpatient rooms are single rooms with an en-suite bathroom or shower. Each room has satellite television and a direct dial telephone, as well as comfortable seating for your visitors. Calls will be charged to your account, for payment upon departure. You may, however, use mobile phones in the hospital unless specifically asked not to by a member of staff. Free WiFi is available.

We encourage parents to stay with their children, if they wish.

**Please note:** the facilities will differ in the Day Care Unit, as these are not en-suite. In the event that we need to move you to another room during your stay, every effort will be made to minimise any inconvenience.

## Catering services

Our menus offer a full range of nutritionally balanced meals to aid your recovery. We cater for all dietary requirements including vegetarian, kosher and special diets, such as gluten-free. Allergen information is available on request.

**We always try to cater for your needs outside these times, if required. Your visitors are also welcome to join you for meals or drinks in your room. These which will be charged separately to your account.**



## **Patient services**

A newspaper of your choice will be delivered to your room daily. Both incoming and outgoing post can be arranged for you as well as typing letters and the receipt or sending of faxes.

- We can help you arrange a visit from clergy of any denomination
- Our in-house pharmacy can cater for all your medicinal needs and prescriptions

## **Visitors**

Friends and relatives are welcome to visit at any time of the day until 10pm. We ask that all visitors report to the Nurses Station on arrival, so that we can ensure visits do not disturb your treatment or recovery.

## **Smoking**

Patients and visitors are not permitted to smoke anywhere within the hospital building or grounds. This includes the use of electronic and vapour cigarettes.



# Your treatment

If there is any procedure you don't want, you must tell the people treating you. The Department of Health provide more information about giving consent on their website at [www.dh.gov.uk/consent](http://www.dh.gov.uk/consent)

## Consenting to your treatment

Consultants and nursing staff need your consent before examining or treating you. Usually you can simply tell them whether or not you agree with their treatment suggestions. However, if your treatment involves sedation or a general anaesthetic you will be asked to sign a consent form. But you can withdraw your consent if you later change your mind – even after signing.

Consultants and nursing staff must ensure you have a suitable understanding to enable you to decide about having treatment. They will write information on the consent form and discuss the choices of treatment with you. Although they may have recommended a particular option, you are free to choose another. For example, people's attitudes vary on things like the amount of risk or pain they are prepared to accept.

This also applies to the amount of information you may or may not want to know about your surgery or treatment. If you would rather not know about certain aspects, then you should discuss any concerns with whoever is treating you.





## Preparation

Before your operation, one of the nurses will check your blood pressure, pulse and temperature. When your consultant and anaesthetist come to see you, they will confirm your medical history and answer any remaining pre-operative questions you may have. It is important that you tell them about any illnesses or allergies you may have, or have suffered from in the past. You will need to remove any nail varnish, nail extensions and cosmetics before your operation. Plain wedding bands may be worn, but will need to be covered with tape during surgery. Other jewellery, including body piercings, will need to be removed.

A nurse will inform you when you should change into your operating gown and put an identity bracelet on your wrist ready for surgery. If you have any allergies, you will also need an allergy band that identifies what they are. Once ready, you will be accompanied to the theatre by a member of the nursing team and a porter or a member of the theatre staff. Most patients walk to theatre, but if you feel this will not be possible, please tell the nurse on admission so that a trolley can be arranged.

## Anaesthesia

The word 'anaesthesia' comes from a Greek word meaning absence or loss of sensation. Anaesthesia is one of the most significant developments of modern medicine, because it allows medical procedures to be performed while you are relaxed and asleep.

If your treatment involves general or regional anaesthesia (see below), you will have been given some information about it in advance. You will also have had the opportunity to talk with the anaesthetist.

### There are three main types of anaesthesia:

- **Local anaesthetic** – numbing a small part of the body
- **Regional anaesthetic** (including spinal and epidural anaesthesia) – numbing an area of the body
- **General anaesthetic** – putting someone to sleep and keeping them asleep for surgery or medical procedures

Often a combination of these is used in order to minimise the doses of drugs needed. This helps to ensure successful anaesthesia and a quick recovery.



So that part of the body then becomes completely insensitive to pain.

Spinal anaesthesia is one of the most common types of regional anaesthesia, used for operations below the waist or in the pelvic region. It involves an injection of anaesthetic into the fluid that surrounds the nerves in the lower part of the spine, numbing you completely from the waist down for a few hours.

An epidural uses a similar technique to spinal anaesthesia but a narrow plastic cannula is left in position near to the nerves in the back. This enables the anaesthetist to give repeated doses of local anaesthetics (and painkillers) without further injections, which is useful for longer operations.

By being able to increase the dose as needed, the anaesthetist can give a lower overall dose so that pain is controlled without complete loss of sensation. The cannula can be left in place for several days, which can be useful for providing post-operative pain relief.

## **General anaesthesia**

The development of new, safer anaesthetic drugs and sophisticated monitoring equipment means that modern anaesthesia is very safe. Several million general anaesthetics are successfully performed each year in the UK.

Anaesthesia usually begins when the anaesthetist injects a drug through a fine plastic tube (cannula) that has been inserted into a vein in the back of your hand. Within a few seconds, this sends you to sleep, quickly and smoothly.

## **Local anaesthesia**

For operations on a small area of the body, it is possible to simply inject a local anaesthetic at the site of the operation. This technique is often performed by the consultant or GP in minor surgery units and is usually only used for short, simple operations, such as stitching a wound or removing a mole.

## **Regional anaesthesia**

A general anaesthetic is not always necessary or advisable. Depending on the type of operation, the anaesthetist can use techniques to completely numb specific parts of the body. A small amount of an anaesthetic drug is injected near to the nerves that supply a part of the body. This temporarily prevents those nerves from sending any messages to the brain that would otherwise have registered pain.

It is also possible to induce anaesthesia with anaesthetic gases, inhaled through a mask. To maintain unconsciousness, the anaesthetist gives you a mixture of oxygen and anaesthetic gases to breathe, throughout the operation. This ensures you remain unconscious and will not feel any pain or remember anything about it. The anaesthetist will monitor your heart rate, the electrical activity of your heart, your blood pressure and the amount of oxygen in your blood, throughout the operation.

It is sometimes necessary for muscle-relaxing drugs to be given as well. This is often to enable the surgeon to perform the operation while relaxing the body's natural muscle tone, which is normally present even when asleep. When a muscle relaxant is used, the muscles responsible for breathing are effectively paralysed, so the anaesthetist has to control the patient's breathing. To do this, a plastic tube is inserted into the windpipe (trachea) and a machine, called a ventilator, inflates and deflates the lungs in an accurate and controlled rhythm.

The anaesthetist will also use strong painkilling drugs mixed with an anti-emetic (an anti-sickness drug), to control pain and nausea during and after surgery.



### **Samples**

Some operations involve removing a part of the body (such as the gall bladder or a tooth). Other operations may require certain samples to be taken as part of your care. These samples may be of blood or small sections of tissue, for example from an unexplained lump. Samples may also be investigated and tested by others, such as healthcare professionals in the hospital laboratory, to provide doctors with results and answers.

You should always be told in advance if samples are likely to be taken. If samples are to be stored or retained, you will also be told in advance, since your permission will need to be obtained. In the interest of safety, no tissue, specimens or implants removed during an operative procedure at Parkside Hospital can be returned to patients.

### **Photographs and videos**

As part of your treatment, a photographic record of some kind may be needed. For example, X-rays, clinical photographs or sometimes a video. You will always be told if this is going to happen. The photograph or recording will be kept with your notes and will be held in confidence as part of your medical record. We will not use your photographs or videos in a way that might allow you to be identified or recognised without your express permission.

# Back in your room



When anaesthesia stops, you begin to recover quite quickly. A drug is given to reverse the effects of any muscle relaxant used and you will be breathing normally again soon after the operation is over. You will wake up in the recovery area and will be looked after by a recovery nurse before returning to your own room. Complications following an operation and anaesthetic are very rare. Most people experience few or no side-effects at all. In fact, many operations are now planned as day cases, without the patient having to stay in hospital overnight.

However, it is common to feel drowsy afterwards, but this usually wears off quickly. When you are fully awake (and depending on the type of surgery) you may be able to have a drink and something to eat. The nurse will continue to monitor your pulse and blood pressure regularly as appropriate.

Some people may experience discomfort after an operation, but this can be relieved with painkilling drugs in the form of injections or tablets. As a result of modern anaesthetic drugs, nausea after an operation is less common than it used to be. Anti-sickness medicine may also be given in the operation itself as the painkillers used are known to be common causes of nausea.

If any after-effects of an operation continue much longer than you were told to expect, nursing staff will always be close at hand to help you.

# Going home

You will have been advised by your consultant or nurse how long your hospital stay is likely to be. After a general anaesthetic, you must stay in hospital for at least 3-4 hours, so that any effects can be monitored at regular intervals. We advise you not to drive your car for at least 24 hours after surgery. We strongly recommend that you ask a friend or relative to collect you. Alternatively, we can arrange a taxi or private ambulance for you.

If you need to take any medication following your departure, it will be given to you when you leave. Should your admission have necessitated an overnight stay, we would expect you to be discharged the following day by mid morning. Please ask for any X-rays or other imaging taken during your stay and bring these with you to any further outpatient consultations.



## Your feedback

We always welcome your feedback, positive or negative, as this helps us maintain and improve our high standards of care. If you are unhappy with any aspect of your stay, please speak to a member of staff so we can do our best to put things right straight away. After your treatment you may be given a short, confidential patient questionnaire to complete. We also have comments and suggestion boxes available in our waiting areas.

## Personal charges

Any personal items e.g. telephone calls, visitors' meals, take home drugs or physiotherapy aids are charged separately and not covered by insurance companies. These items will be billed to you at a later date.

## Follow-up care

If you need to see your consultant again, following your discharge, an outpatient appointment will be made before you leave, or you will be notified of your appointment as soon as possible. If you have any concerns or questions or you are in need of advice, please telephone the hospital on **020 8971 8000** and ask to speak to the duty sister.

# How to find us



-  **By Tube:** Tube stations at East Putney, Southfields or Wimbledon (all District Line), plus a short taxi journey.
-  **By Bus:** Route 93 runs between Putney Bridge and North Cheam via Wimbledon Station, and stops outside Parkside Hospital.
-  **By Tram:** Tram terminal from Croydon to Wimbledon Station.
-  **By Car:** Situated close to Putney and Wandsworth Bridge to the north and easily accessible from the M25 and A3.
-  **By Train:** Mainline railway stations at Wimbledon or Putney.

# Contact us

We try to be readily accessible to patients and there are a number of ways you can reach us. You may call the hospital switchboard on **020 8971 8000**.

Alternatively, you can contact some departments on the direct lines as listed below:

**Client Service Advisors**..... **020 8971 8026**

**Admissions Department** ..... **020 8971 8012**

**Package prices** ..... **020 8971 8569**

**Patient accounts** ..... **020 8971 8569**  
(for enquiries about invoices)

**Pharmacy** ..... **020 8971 8023**

**Radiology** ..... **020 8971 8025**

**Physiotherapy** ..... **020 8971 8021**



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