

# Regional Anaesthesia for Perioperative Pain Management

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Dear Patient,

As part of your anaesthetic management today you have received some form of Regional Anaesthesia for pain control during and after your operation:

- **Spinal or epidural Anaesthesia**
- **Peripheral nerve block** (a nerve block on a limb)

All these anaesthetic techniques are very safe and effective. Serious complications are very rare. Normal side effects of regional anaesthesia include numbness and heaviness in your limb(s) or areas of numbness on your body.

Some of these symptoms might still be present when you are discharged home. They should resolve within six hours for spinal and epidural anaesthesia and within 48 hours for peripheral nerve blocks. Strength and feeling in your limbs should return to normal.

**Remember to protect your limb from potential hazards while it is still numb (for example hot surfaces).**

Please call us for advice if you have any concerns regarding your anaesthetic management once you are at home or experience any of the following symptoms within your first week at home.

- **Severe headache** (after spinal/epidural anaesthesia)
- **Sensitivity to light** (photophobia) or ringing in your ears (after spinal/epidural)
- A **suspicion of infection** around the injection site of the epidural/spinal or nerve block. Signs include a temperature, localised redness, tenderness, swelling or oozing from the wound site.
- Any **pain or weakness** in your back or limbs which did not exist before your surgery and you do not think were caused by your surgery
- **Persisting numbness** or altered sensation on your body or limbs
- **Difficulties in passing urine**
- Any **new numbness or weakness** in your limbs which developed after you were discharged home
- **Difficulty breathing** after having had a nerve block for shoulder surgery.

If you have any queries during the week between 7.00 and 19.00 please contact the Hospital switchboard under **01493 452452** and ask to speak to the 'Anaesthetist of the Day/Trouble Shooter'.

Out of hours or at weekends please ask to speak to the Anaesthetist-on-call, either the Consultant or Middle-grade anaesthetist. If your operation was more than a week ago, you might want to contact your GP first.

## Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

### Trust Values

- Courtesy and respect
- A welcoming and positive attitude
- Polite, friendly and interested in people
- Value and respect people as individuals  
So people feel **welcome**
- Attentively kind and helpful
- Look out for dignity, privacy & humanity
- Attentive, responsive & take time to help
- Visible presence of staff to provide care  
So people feel **cared for**

### Responsive communication

- Listen to people & answer their questions
- Keep people clearly informed
- Involve people  
So people feel **in control**
- Effective and professional
- Safe, knowledgeable and reassuring
- Effective care / services from joined up teams
- Organised and timely, looking to improve  
So people feel **safe**



The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

**For a large print version of this leaflet, contact PALS 01493 453240**