

# Information

## for patients having

# Cardiac Surgery



# HEARTSWELL

YOUR LOCAL HEART CHARITY

South West Cardiothoracic  
Centre at Derriford Hospital

Derriford  
Hospital  
Derriford Rd  
Plymouth  
PL6 8DH

Telephone  
(01752) 202082

This booklet is sponsored by

**The Charity**  
**HeartSWell**  
**South West**



**HEARTSWELL**

YOUR LOCAL HEART CHARITY

**“Supporting heart sufferers, their partners and carers in the South West”**

Registered Charity 1092779

Patrons : Peter Gorton, Johnny Cowling, Johnny Mercer MP

President: David Fitzgerald

**HeartSWell Lodge, Blunts Lane, Plymouth, Devon PL6 8BE**

**Tel: 01752 315929 • Email: [info@heartswell.org.uk](mailto:info@heartswell.org.uk)**

**[www.heartswell.org.uk](http://www.heartswell.org.uk)**

# **The following information is for patients coming in for **heart surgery** at Derriford Hospital.**

When you receive a date for your surgery you will want to make plans for your admission and your return home.

This leaflet is designed to help prepare you and your relatives/friends by answering some common questions that people have.

## **What should I do before I come into hospital?**

Please follow instructions according to your admission letter. Because of the nature of cardiac surgery occasionally there are emergency operations that have to be done at short notice. This means that unfortunately sometimes we have to reschedule surgery dates. We try to avoid changing dates for surgery but if this happens you will be given a new date as soon as possible.

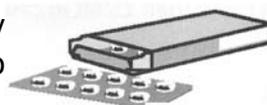
## **What should I do if I feel unwell when I have a date for my surgery?**

If you feel unwell in any way at all (for example: a cold, chest infection, other infections) please contact your Consultant's Secretary.

## What should I bring with me?

# DO

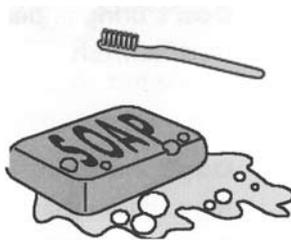
**Do** bring in any tablets or medicines that you may have been told to in the pre-admission clinic. If you have been prescribed treatment for MRSA or MSSA please start this the day before admission and bring it with you into hospital so your treatment may continue.



**Do** bring in the telephone number(s) of your next of kin if different from your own home number, if you haven't already given it to us at pre admission clinic.

**Do** bring in a wash bag containing, non-scented soap, flannel, toothpaste and toothbrush, shaving equipment, comb or hairbrush.

**Do** bring in a change of night dress/pyjamas (light ones are best because the wards are warm), dressing gown, sensible slippers and some loose comfortable clothes to go home in. **One bag of property only.**



Ladies may find it more comfortable to wear a soft sports bra after surgery. Please keep the amount of property you bring in to a minimum.



## Where do I go when I get to the hospital?

**You need to go straight to Clearbrook ward on level 7.**

Please follow the instructions given to you in your admission letter. Whilst we try to accommodate all patients on Clearbrook the night before surgery, sometimes you may be admitted to one of the other wards in the cardiothoacic unit. On rare occasions where we are unable to accommodate you on these wards you may be asked to stay at The Lodge or if you live locally give you the option to return home. Arrangements will be made with you to do this.

## Where should I go when I get to the ward?

As soon as you arrive on the ward go straight to the nurses desk to let us know you have arrived. All your tests needed for your operation and most of the information about you will have been collected in the pre admission clinic, but we still need to confirm that the information given remains the same.

We will also want to take your blood pressure, pulse, and temperature, weigh you and take a urine sample.

One of the surgical team and your anaesthetist will also see you, in preparation for your surgery the following day.



It is important that you continue to eat and drink normally on the day you come into hospital, we will only ask you not to have anything else to eat or drink from midnight that day.

You may have a relative or friend you wish to accompany you to hospital they are welcome to stay with you until you have settled in, even if this is out of regular visiting hours.

## **Visiting times are**

Clearbrook Ward

2.30pm - 8.00pm

Torrington Ward CICU & CHDU

10.00am -12.00pm and 3.00pm -7.30pm

## **Where can my relatives/friends or carers stay when I am in hospital?**

Your relatives, friends and carers can stay at The Lodge.

This is a short walk from the hospital. Please contact the lodge for information and accommodation charges.

A courtesy bus service is available between the hospital and lodge Mon-Friday at certain times.

The Lodge is run by

Heartswell Lodge Ltd for relatives, friends and carers of people in any of the local hospitals.

**Telephone 01752 315900**



## What will happen on the day of my operation?

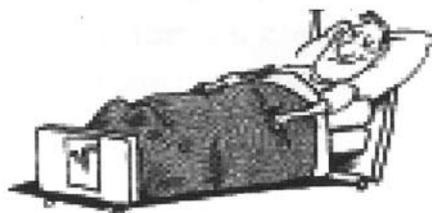
You will be asked to have a shower on the morning of your operation, with a non-scented soap and then put on a theatre gown. You may also be asked to shave your chest and legs if required with clippers provided by the hospital.

Your anaesthetist may want you to have something to make you feel more relaxed before you go to the operating theatre this is called a 'pre-med' and will be given at the time it has been prescribed.

Once you have been given your pre-med you may be given a small amount of oxygen.

When the operating theatre is ready for you their staff will come to collect you. The nurse who has been looking after you that morning will go with you to the operating theatre.

From there we hand over your care to the theatre staff.



You may want a relative or close friend to come and see you before you go for your operation this is not a problem.

The length of time you are in theatre depends on the type of operation. It is usually 3 to 5 hours.

After your operation you are moved from the operating theatre to the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit with an anaesthetist and theatre staff.

During this time you will still be asleep.



Flowers are not allowed on any of the wards or in intensive care as they can cause infection.

## **What is it like On the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit (CICU)?**

CICU is a twelve-bedded unit, CHDU is a smaller six-bedded unit. Each patient has their own nurse to look after them on the unit. There we watch your condition closely using special machines.

Visiting times for CICU and CHDU are:

10.00am - 12.00pm AND 3.00pm - 7.30pm

All visitors must ring the bell before entering the unit in order to protect the privacy of all patients. There may sometimes be a short wait, however we will try to bring you in as soon as possible.

We only have two visitors per bed, as space is limited.

Because of the equipment used and to help us to monitor patients after surgery, it is a mixed sex unit. We aim to maintain privacy and dignity at all times.

**You will have a machine to breathe for you until your anaesthetic wears off and you wake up.**

This will be removed as soon as possible (usually 2-4 hours after the operation).

You will then have an oxygen mask on. You may then be moved into Torrington High Dependency Unit (HDU) if a bed is available. This is a six-bedded unit next to intensive care. If not you will stay overnight in intensive care.

You will have a heart monitor so that we can watch your heart rhythm. There will be equipment to give you fluids and medicines. You will have 2-3 chest drains in following your operation. These are tubes that drain any fluid into a bottle and help your chest get back to normal after the operation.

You will also have a catheter; this is a tube that goes into your bladder to drain urine into a bag.

**Pain relief (analgesia) will be given, to you by the nursing staff until you are awake.**

Once awake, you will be able to manage your own pain relief by using the patient controlled analgesia (P.C.A.).

The pain relief is controlled using a handset with a green-lit button on it. When you press the button you will get a measured amount of pain killer. The machine will only allow you to have a certain amount so you cannot overdose.

By mid-morning of the day after your operation we plan to remove most of the machines that have been used to monitor you closely. We also aim to help you get out of bed at this stage. This will help your recovery and help prevent complications that can happen with bed rest. Plans will be made to move you back to the ward.

The staff on the unit are experienced with caring for patients and their loved ones at this anxious time. Please ask if you are unsure of anything.

**No question is too small to ask if it will reduce your anxieties.**



## Pain relief

Once you are able to eat and drink normally your pain relief will be changed from intravenous, (into your veins) via the PCA machine, to tablets. It is important that your pain is controlled well so you are able to breathe deeply and cough (as advised by the physiotherapists) and to get some exercise by gently walking around. You will be expected to mobilise (walk and move) as soon as you are able.

If after your operation you feel your pain is not well controlled do not be afraid to tell your nurse caring for you. We can give you extra or alternative pain relief. We will also ask you to score your pain out of 10, zero meaning no pain, 10 meaning intolerable pain.

After the pain relief has had time to work we also ask you if you are satisfied with it, which has a similar scoring system. Pain is individual to each person so some people will need more pain relief than others.

Please be aware that Derriford Hospital has a no lifting policy. We will help you to be as independent as possible with moving.

Some of the pain relief we give you can cause constipation. So we ask you to be aware of having your bowels open. It is important not to get constipated, as we don't want you to strain when passing a motion.

If you haven't had your bowels open or are prone to constipation please tell your nurse so we can give you something to get you back into your usual pattern.

## **Nausea and loss of appetite**

Nausea and loss of appetite is quite common after any anaesthetic. If you feel nauseous after your operation let your nurse know so we can give you some anti-sickness medication, firstly to make you feel better and secondly so you'll want to eat.

It is important to take a good diet as this helps your wounds to heal. Lack of appetite and taste is also quite common; don't be alarmed, it will return back to normal after a short time.

If your family or friends want to bring in food for you that's OK, but be aware we are unable to reheat food due to Derriford Hospitals Food Hygiene Policy.

## Feet up

It is again quite common to have swollen feet after your operation due to fluid. When you are resting it is advisable to put your feet up either on your bed or a stool to help reduce the swelling.

## Phoning the ward

We request that you nominate one person to contact the ward and relay information about you to relatives and friends. This is to minimise the number of telephone enquiries the ward staff have to deal with.



## Mobile phones



Mobile phones are permitted on the Clearbrook ward. **But not on CICU or CHDU** as they interfere with medical equipment.

Patient line phones are available on the ward for you to use.

We aim to make your stay as comfortable as possible. If you have any **worries or concerns** please contact a member of the ward staff, the ward manager (Senior Sister) or Matron who will all be happy to help.

## Useful Numbers

**Derriford Switchboard** 01752 202082

**Admission ward Clearbrook** (01752) 431771 / (01752) 439143  
Level 7 - Ward Manager Nia Thielmann

**Torrington CICU** (01752) 431782  
Level 6 - Ward Manager Sylvia Villaquiran

**Torrington CHDU** (01752) 431780  
Level 6 - Ward Manager Natalie Howes

**Cardiothoracic Matron**  
Judy Frame bleep via switchboard

**Cardiothoracic Surgical Care Practitioners**  
(Pre-assessment) (01752) 439180

**Braunton** (01752) 431740

**Bickleigh** (01752) 439163

**Crownhill** (01752) 431760

Nurses in all areas of the Cardiothoracic Unit at Derriford compiled this leaflet.

With Thanks to: Ruth Cornish, Natalie Howes, Sam Rafferty, Julie Overnell, Nia Thielmann, Judy Frame and Toby Rankin. Our thanks also to the patients who reviewed the booklet for us.

# Heartswell South West

Heartswell South West is a registered charity committed to supporting heart patients their families and carers across the Westcountry.

Since its beginnings in 1996, Heartswell South West has raised well over a million pounds. This would not have been possible without the tremendous efforts of our members, volunteers and supporters and the generosity of the general public. This hard work has enabled the charity to provide vital cardiac equipment and services for hospitals in Devon and Cornwall.

The charity also provides funding towards specialist cardiac nursing, a counselling service for patients and their families, as well as the provision of the Cardiac Information Booklets.

Heartswell's largest achievement is the building of The Lodge, entirely funded by the tremendous efforts of local people, fundraisers and volunteers. The Lodge opened its doors in 2001 and provides accommodation to relatives of patients receiving treatments at Derriford.

For more information about Heartswell, our work and how you can help, please contact:

01752 315929

[info@heartswell.org.uk](mailto:info@heartswell.org.uk)

[www.heartswell.org.uk](http://www.heartswell.org.uk)

# The Lodge

## Accommodation adjacent to Derriford Hospital



The Lodge provides accommodation for relatives, friends, and carers of patients undergoing treatment at any of the local hospitals, including Derriford Hospital, the Peninsular Treatment Centre and the Nuffield Derriford. The accommodation is of a very high standard at affordable prices. The Lodge also provides accommodation for patients who are admitted to Derriford on the day of their planned surgery, but who live too far away to travel on the day. In addition to this there are self catering facilities and breakfast is provided. There is a small but excellent team who are both helpful and supportive. The Lodge is within walking distance of Derriford Hospital and a courtesy bus is provided for guests during the week at specified times.

**Contact: 01752 315900**

**Email: [info@thelodgederriford.co.uk](mailto:info@thelodgederriford.co.uk)**

**Website: <http://www.thelodgederriford.co.uk>**

HeartSWell Lodge, Blunts Lane, Plymouth, Devon PL6 8BE

This leaflet is also available  
in large print

Contact: Quality Manager on  
01752 763090



**HEARTSWELL**

YOUR LOCAL HEART CHARITY

For revision  
Nov 2016

Ref No.  
B29\TS\C\CF\pre op info