NHS
The Leeds Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust

Leeds Pain and Interventional Neuromodulation Service

Discharge advice following implantation of a permanent Spinal Cord Stimulator (SCS)

Information for patients

Leeds Centre for Neurosciences

This leaflet is for patients who have had a Spinal Cord Stimulator implanted and gives post operative information and advice.

It is very important that you are aware of wound care and post operative advice and follow up before being discharged. Please check with the nursing staff and read this information leaflet.

Mobilising

You may gently mobilise on the ward as soon as you feel able to. If you have had any sedation in theatre or require any assistance, please ask a member of the ward staff to assist you before you attempt to get out of bed.

Once you are home please begin to gently mobilise as much as you are able to. It is difficult to assess whether the stimulator is of any benefit unless you take part in your usual daily activities. However, please take care not to over exert yourself in the days and weeks after your implant.

Please avoid sitting or standing for long periods. To reduce the risk of your lead moving, it is very important that for the first 6-8 weeks you avoid any heavy lifting, bending, twisting or stretching. Do not lift your arms above your head.

Please do not drive for four weeks following the implant of your SCS.

Wound Care

Unless you have been advised otherwise, you may remove your wound dressing and shower after three days. Please do not 'scrub' or wash your wounds.

Please do not have a bath or immerse in water (e.g. swimming) for at least six weeks following your implant.

Wound review

You need to have a wound check at your GP Practice 7 - 14 days after your implant (usually at 10 days). **Please make sure you check prior to discharge exactly when this should be, this may vary dependant on if you have stitches or glue to close your wounds**. If you have stitches, these will need removing at this appointment. Please ensure you make this appointment. If you are unable to do this, let the Pain Team know. **If ANY problems are identified at this appointment (e.g. signs of infection), you must contact the Pain Nurses straight away and follow advice from your GP.**

Please monitor your wounds for signs of infection, it may be easier to ask someone to do this for you. Signs of infection include redness or swelling around your wounds and fluid or pus leaking. If you notice any of these signs or feel unwell with a high temperature or flu like symptoms, please call the Pain Nurses. **You will need to be seen on the same day so if it is out of hours (not between 08:00 - 16:00 Monday - Friday), or you have been unable to speak to a Pain Nurse, you need to contact your Out of Hours GP or go to A&E if unwell**. Please ensure you also contact the Pain Nurses to let them know.

You may see a small amount of blood around your wound site, however, if the bleeding is more than a small amount or is leaking through your dressing, you need to be seen on the same day, please call the Pain Nurses or out of hours contact your GP or A&E. Again, please ensure you also contact the Pain Nurses to let them know.

It is normal to feel some soreness and discomfort around your wound site for a number of weeks after. Please discuss this with your GP if you feel you are in significant pain that is not managed.

If you have any new weakness in both your legs or your arms, if you lose the ability to lift and/or weight bear or if you have any bowel or bladder incontinence, go to A&E immediately.

Medication

If you have stopped taking Warfarin, Clopidogrel or Aspirin or any medication that affects the clotting of your blood prior to surgery please follow advise from the Team as to when to restart this.

Do not make any other changes to your pain medication without advice from either the Pain Nurses or your GP. This will be reviewed when you see the Nurses at your follow up appointments but you can always discuss this with your GP.

Pain Diary

Please keep a daily pain diary, noting your pain scores when sitting, standing and walking on each of your programs.

Patient Pathway and follow up

Further follow up appointments will normally be with the Pain Nurses in Leeds. Please check your letter for the date, time and location.

You will normally be seen 7 - 14 days after your implant (usually at day 10) either at you GP Practice or by the Pain Nurses (as discussed in wound care section). Please make sure you check prior to discharge when this should be, this may vary dependant on if you have stitches or glue to close your wounds.

Then you will normally be reviewed at six weeks and three months by the Pain Nurses. **(Please note: These appointments may be phone calls, video appointments or face to face).**

Following this you may not require regular appointments, but if you have any problems with your SCS, you can contact us and we can book you into a rapid access appointment.

If you have problems in between these times, please contact the Pain Nurses.

If for any reason you have not received an appointment, please contact the admin team on 0113 392 3495 or 0113 392 2090.

Please remember to bring your pain diary and patient programmer with you to each appointment. You will also be asked to complete a pain questionnaire every time you attend an appointment with the Pain Nurses.

Contact us

- **For any queries Monday to Friday between 08.00 - 16.00** Please call **0113 3922178** and leave a message for the Pain Nurses with **your name** and **NHS number**.

  We will try to get back to you the same day but cannot guarantee this.

- **For all other times please call your GP, 111 or go to A&E (for anything more urgent)**. If you do have any problems out of hours please always let the Pain Nurses know as well.

Questions / Notes

What did you think of your care?

Scan the QR code or visit **bit.ly/nhsleedsfft**

Your views matter

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