

**Patient  
Information**

# Enhanced Recovery Programme for planned (elective) caesarean section

## Introduction

This leaflet gives you information about the Enhanced Recovery Programme (ERP) which you will be offered if you are having a planned caesarean section. After reading this leaflet we hope that you will have better understanding of the operation and recovery so that you can play an active role.

## What is ERP?

The aim of ERP is to help you to return to full health as quickly as possible following the birth of your baby by planned caesarean section.

Following the ERP guidance will make sure that you are in the best of health before surgery and that you are more likely to recover well after surgery.

Research has shown that the earlier you can get up and move around and eat and drink, the quicker the recovery time.

For you to have a good recovery, you and your partner must follow the guidance given to you.

## Before your operation

It is important that you are in the best possible health in the weeks before your surgery, as this will help you recover quicker and with fewer complications.

### Activity

Make sure you take enough exercise by walking whenever you can. We advise you not to start any new exercise regimes without speaking to your community midwife first.

### Diet

Make sure you eat a well-balanced diet with all the essential nutrients. We advise you not to diet in the weeks leading up to your operation. Your community midwife can give you advice on diet and nutrition. It is important your iron levels are good before surgery, this should be checked at 28 weeks and iron

Reference No.

**GHPI1444\_01\_18**

Department

**Maternity**

Review due

**January 2021**

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Prescribed if needed.

**Smoking**

Smoking will slow down your healing following surgery and you will be more prone to infections. Smoking reduces the amount of oxygen carried in the blood to tissues which helps with healing. If you have continued to smoke in pregnancy, we strongly advise you to stop smoking 2 weeks before the surgery and for 6 weeks after. This will allow time for tissues to heal after surgery. Please contact your community midwife if you need help with stopping smoking.

**Help at home**

We advise you to arrange to have extra help at home for about 1 week after the surgery. As well as coping with a new baby, you are likely to feel sore and very tired, so will benefit from extra support.

**Pre assessment clinic**

A couple of days before your operation you will be seen in the Day Assessment Clinic by a midwife and maternity care assistant.

Blood samples will be taken and your pre-operation medication will be given to you. You will also have 2 MRSA swabs taken from the nose and the groin, if they were not taken at 36 weeks.

MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) is a type of bacteria that lives harmlessly on the skin or in the nose, with around a third of the population being affected. MRSA can spread very easily and can make patients unwell if it enters the body. If you test positive for MRSA please do not worry as it can be treated before your operation.

You will be given a time to arrive on the Delivery Suite for your operation to deliver your baby.

Please bring your usual medication to the pre-assessment clinic. The midwife will advise you which medications to continue.

**What to eat and drink before the operation**

You can have 500mls of an isotonic drink such as Lucozade Sport®, Gatorade® or Powerade®. You should drink this 2 hours before your admission or up until 07:00am.

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**Please do not eat or drink anything after 7:00am.**

| Admission Time | No food after: | Isotonic drink |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 7:45am         | 2:00am         | 6:30am         |
| 10:00am        | 4:00am         | 8:00am         |

Pre-op medication to be taken at 6:00am

### Typical recovery times after surgery

- 0 hours      Skin to skin contact with mum or birthing partner in theatre.
- 1 hour        Baby's first feed, mum to drink freely as tolerated (no fizzy drinks, as not usually well tolerated)
- 2 hours        Transfer to postnatal ward with baby. Start moving legs as feeling returns. Continue drinking and have something light to eat such as toast.  
Ask for anti-emetic (sickness) medication if you are feeling sick. Have pain relief if you need it.
- 2 to 6 hours    continue to move your legs in bed and remember it is okay to ask for help caring for and feeding your Baby. Ask for pain relief if you need it.
- 12 hours      your urinary catheter will be taken out about 12hrs after the birth.  
You will need to walk to the toilet to empty your Bladder and the amount of urine you are passing will need to be measured.  
You will be given help to get out of bed; this is to make sure the strength has returned to your legs.
- 24 to 36 hours    You will be able to go home if you and your baby are well.

**Patient  
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Gloucestershire Royal Hospital  
Tel 0300 422 5525

**Day Assessment Unit**

Gloucestershire Royal Hospital  
Tel 0300 422 6104  
Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:30pm

**Ante-natal Clinic**

Cheltenham General Hospital  
Tel 0300 422 2346  
Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:30pm

**Healthy Lifestyles**

Tel 0800 1223788  
Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

**Maternity Ward**

Gloucestershire Royal Hospital  
Tel 0300 422 5520

**Your daily diary**

Your daily diary is for you to fill in while you are in hospital and at home. It is a useful guide to help you keep track of what you should be achieving on a daily basis. We hope that keeping a daily diary will help you to become more involved in your recovery.

Please complete your daily diary and write down any comments or concerns, these can then be discussed with your midwife.

**My recovery diary**

You and your partner can complete this before and after your baby has been born. Tick the box when you have completed each step. Please add a comment if you have not been able to complete any of the steps.

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**Pre-op**

- Medication taken
- Carbohydrate drink taken

**In recovery area**

- Skin to skin contact with baby
- Baby fed
- Mum tolerating fluids
- Anti-sickness medication given if needed
- Is pain under control?
- Have you got anti-embolic stockings on?

**Day of surgery on ward**

- Can you move your legs?
- Are you doing deep breathing exercises?
  - Are you eating and drinking?
- Is your pain under control?
- Have you sat out of bed?
- Are you feeding your baby/babies?
- Have you got anti-embolic stockings on?
- Have you had Fragmin® (to help prevent blood clots)?
- Has your urinary catheter been removed 12 hours after surgery?
- Have you done some walking?
- Have you passed urine?

**Comments/ questions**

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**Day 1**

- Are you doing deep breathing exercises?
- Are you doing leg and arm exercises every waking hour?
- Are you walking to bathroom?
- Is your pain under control?
- Are you passing urine normally?
- Have you discussed going home (discharge) with your midwife?
- Is your baby feeding?
- Has your baby been seen by paediatrician?
- Are you eating and drinking normally?
- Have you opened your bowels or passed wind?
- Do you have help arranged for when you are at home?

**Comments/ questions**

**Day 2**

- Have you done your breathing and other exercises?
- Is your pain under control?
- Have you removed your wound dressing?
- Is your baby feeding?
- Has your community midwife visited?

**Comments/ questions**

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**Day 3**

- Have you done your arm and leg exercises every waking hour?
- Is your pain under control?
- Is your baby feeding?
- Has your community midwife visited?

**Comments/ questions**

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