Discharge advice following a cranioplasty

This leaflet is for general advice following your discharge.

Medication

It is important you continue with your present medication.

Depending on the size of your cranioplasty, your wound will be sore for a few days. It is advisable to take painkillers regularly when you get home. You will be given 7 days supply when you are discharged however it is important that you make an appointment with your GP for more tablets if needed.

Wound care

Because your wound has been opened a second time in order to replace your missing bone, your stitches/clips will remain in place for 10-14 days following your operation. If you have been discharged from hospital by this time, your GP practice nurse can remove the stitches/clips. If clips the ward staff will give you the clip removers, which you must take with you to your practice nurse. The ward nurses will give you instructions when these need to be removed. Until this time wash around your wound site with warm clean water.

Once stitches/clips have been removed you may use shampoo and you will need to avoid rubbing the area for a few weeks.

If your wound becomes red, swollen, painful, or begins to discharge, please contact your GP.

Lifestyle

You should be able to return to the lifestyle you had prior to your cranioplasty surgery. Following discharge from hospital, it is normal to feel more tired and lethargic and you are the best judge of what you can and can’t do so be guided by how you feel and rest when tired.

If you had returned back to work between having your original operation and coming back in for your cranioplasty, you will need to remain off work for 4-6 weeks. You will require a sick note to cover your stay in hospital, thereafter, sick notes can be obtained from your GP.

Sleeping on the side of your cranioplasty is OK to do so when comfortable. Avoid any heavy lifting and strenuous exercise for 6 weeks; it may be best to avoid contact sports completely, if you are unsure, ask your consultant.

If you are planning a holiday, please note that there are no restrictions with flying following a cranioplasty.

You may be sent an outpatients appointment, it is important that you attend so that your progress can be assessed and you can bring up any questions you may have.