

Getting as fit as possible for surgery

In the run up to your surgery, there are things you can do to help you make a better recovery.

We have spoken to you honestly about COVID-19 and how we can best tackle the risks, how vitally important it is to follow the advice given by your hospital regarding testing and isolation prior to admission.

The same things that will help you get fit for surgery will also help you if you ever catch COVID-19, therefore now is a good time to do these things.

Below are some health topics that can really make a difference to your health and recovery from surgery. Even making these changes just 6 weeks before your operation can be a really beneficial and these are changes that could help you for the rest of your life.

Smoking

It is in your best interests to stop smoking as soon as possible, especially before surgery. This will reduce the risk of any breathing problems during and after surgery.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stop-smoking-treatments/>

Alcohol

Drinking too much alcohol may slow your recovery and also make it more likely that you get an infection. Men and women are advised not to drink more than 14 units of alcohol a week, and we ask our patients to try to keep to these limits. If you would like more information, please visit these webpages:

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/for-your-body/drink-less/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/alcohol-misuse/>

Diet

Eating a healthy diet will improve wound healing, reducing muscle weakness and tiredness during your recovery. A good diet will also help you fight infection.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/>

Obesity and weight loss

Trying to lose weight can be difficult, yet the best way to help tackle this is to eat a healthy calorie-reduced diet and exercise regularly. Even losing a small amount of weight before surgery will help. Set yourself a goal that you can realistically achieve.

For those patient's that have a BMI of over 30, access can be made available to a "healthy lifestyle" referral through your GP, this will include reduced fees for gym membership and Slimming world etc.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/obesity/>

Physical activity – moderate level

We should all take some form of moderate exercise every day, such as a short walk up to 30 minutes daily around your local area. This will make you stronger, reduce breathing issues and build up stamina. These will all help you to get better quicker.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/>

Diabetes

If you have diabetes, we ask that you try to keep your sugar levels within the limits agreed with your doctor or nurse. Poorly controlled diabetes can be a serious concern during surgery. Please don't hesitate to talk to your clinical team in the weeks leading to your surgery if you are at all concerned. We recognise things may not be perfect but taking steps to reduce the risks is all we can ask our patients to do.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diabetes/>

Mental health and wellbeing

Many patients face concerns and anxieties before going into hospital, or mentally dealing with an ongoing condition or illness. There are many resources that can help to prepare yourself mentally.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/>

Managing pain

Many patients get aches and pains in their muscle and joints. This resource will help you to manage these.

<https://www.csp.org.uk/conditions/managing-pain-home>

Further information

If you require any support for patients with Learning disabilities or learning difficulties prior to surgery or treatment, please see the link below for information.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/learning-disabilities/>