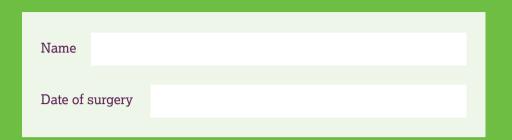
The ROYAL MARSDEN NHS Foundation Trust

GEARS: Your post surgery recovery programme

DIEP Flap Breast Reconstruction patient checklist







We understand that undertaking cancer surgery might be a stressful period. To alleviate some of the stress on your mind and body, we recommend following the GEARS programme.

GEARS stands for:



Day before your surgery



Morning of surgery

Task		Completed
	– Remain active until your surgery	
	– No food after midnight – Only drink water until 6am; nothing after 6am	
	 Continue regular medications as directed by your pre-assessment nurse 	
	– Have a shower before coming to hospital	
	 Bring a supportive bra Ask any questions you have before your surgery Plan details for your discharge to avoid delays 	

Immediately after your surgery

Task		Completed	Task
	– Deep breathing exercises throughout the day – Do not lie flat		 Deep breathing exercises throughout the day Sit out of bed for a minimum of one hour Mobilise to the bathroom as required Team to consider referring for chest physio if required
	 Drink sips of water; progress to clear fluids if tolerating 		- Eat and drink normally after being reviewed by your team
	 Learn to use Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA) Make your team aware if you are in pain 		 Make your team aware if you are in pain Pain team will see you to optimise your pain relief
	 No actions required today You will be wearing your supportive bra when you return from theatre 		- Stop PCA at 8am ward round, and start regular oral analgesia and laxatives
	 Your nurse will check your DIEP flap regularly throughout the night 		 Your team will remove your urinary catheter if you are mobilising Your team will remove your arterial line, if one was inserted for your operation
	 Raise any questions or concerns to your team Plan details of your discharge to avoid delays 		 Your nurse will continue to check your DIEP flap regularly, but the frequency will gradually reduce
			 Raise any questions or concerns to your team Learn how to administer Tinzaparin injection Wear support bra and pants if drains are removed Continue planning your discharge (refer to SAFER discharge checklist on page 12)

Day 1 after your surgery

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Completed

Day 2 after your surgery

Task		Completed
	 Mobilise with your physiotherapist Exercise as directed by your physiotherapist 	
	– Eat and drink normally	
	Make your team aware if you are in painPain team will see you if required	
٢	 Your team will remove your urinary catheter if not already removed Your nurse will continue to regularly check your DIEP flap, the frequency will gradually reduce Your abdominal drain may be removed after surgical review If you have abdominal microfoam this will be removed today Shower thoroughly today 	
	 Raise any questions or concerns to your team Independent with tinizaparin injection administration Wear supportive underwear Continue planning your discharge (refer to SAFER discharge checklist on page 12) 	
	2	

Day 3 after your surgery

Task		Completed
	 Mobilise independently as tolerated (including stairs if directed to do so) 	
۲	– Eat and drink normally	
	 Make your team aware if you are in pain Your team will ensure your discharge medications are ready 	
	 Your nurse will continue to check your DIEP flap, the frequency will gradually reduce You may have your abdominal drain removed today after surgical team review 	
٢	 Raise any questions or concerns to your team Your team may consider discharge today if SAFER discharge checklist achieved (see page 12) Ensure you are confident with your tinzaparin injection administration and learn how to care for your wounds 	

Day 4 after your surgery

Task		Completed
	– Dress and mobilise freely in preparation for discharge	
	– Eat and drink normally	
	 You will have all of your medications explained to you before discharge 	
٢	 All cannulas will be removed before discharge Your abdominal drain will be removed before discharge. If not, a plan will be made to remove it after you have gone home 	
	 Raise any questions or concerns to your team Discharge home – SAFER discharge checklist achieved (see page 12) 	

Frequently asked questions

When can I start driving?

You can drive as soon as you are off strong painkillers and can confidently perform an emergency stop, if in doubt please contact your insurer.

When is my next appointment?

Your discharge summary will include information on follow up appointments, duration of discharge medication and who to contact if you have questions.

How long do I continue injecting myself with Tinzaparin?

Most patients continue to use the Tinzaparin injections for 28 days postoperatively. A small group of patients will be specifically directed to use the injections for longer for clinical reasons. The team will discuss this with you directly.

SAFER Clinical Criteria for Discharge (CCD)

- 1. Mobilising freely; eating and drinking adequately
- 2. Pain well controlled with oral analgesia
- 3. Independent with care for wounds and dressings; or District Nurse arranged
- 4. Self-administering Tinzaparin injections
- 5. All lines/drains removed; or plan for removal as outpatient
- 6. All concerns addressed, contact details given, follow up arranged

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This booklet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

Details of the references used in writing this booklet are available on request from: The Royal Marsden Help Centre Freephone: 0800 783 7176 Email: patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk

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Contact details

It is **very important** that if you have any concerns or problems after leaving hospital, you contact someone as soon as possible.

Your key worker:

The Royal Marsden Macmillan Hotline 020 8915 6899 (available 24 hours a day, seven days a week)

Other useful sources of patient information:

Macmillan Cancer Support

www.macmillan.org.uk 0808 808 0000 (free phone)

Macmillan provides information and support on cancer from diagnosis to treatment and beyond. A wide range of resources are also offered.

Cancer Research UK

www.cancerresearchuk.org

CRUK has a patient information website, with information on all types of cancer and treatment choices.

