

Going home after a spinal anaesthetic

What is a spinal anaesthetic?

You have had a 'spinal anaesthetic'. This means a small amount of local anaesthetic was injected into the fluid surrounding your spine to temporarily 'freeze' the nerves and make your lower body and legs numb and weak enough to have your operation.

How long does it last?

The effect usually takes between 2 and 4 hours to wear off, depending on the dose your procedure required.

When can I go home?

Before you go home the spinal anaesthetic must have completely worn off. This means you should be able to walk and move about as you do normally. You should also be able to pass urine normally before discharge.

What should I do at home?

When you get home you should rest and lie down for most of the rest of the day. You may get up and be active as you wish tomorrow.

What may the side effects be?

Spinal anaesthesia does not usually cause back ache but your skin may be a little tender where the injection was put in for a day or two.

Your skin *may* be a little itchy for a few hours.

You *may* get a headache. Most headaches after operations are mild and will get better with simple painkillers. Rarely, patients who have had a spinal anaesthetic develop a severe headache. If your headache is severe and stops you going about your normal activities we would like to know about it.

**If you have a severe headache after a spinal anaesthetic please call the
Outpatient Anaesthetic Hotline on 01423 557733**

For all other queries or concerns after your operation please use the contact phone numbers given in your discharge pack.

If you require this information in an alternative language or format (such as Braille, audiotape or large print), please ask the staff who are looking after you.