

Pectus Excavatum Discharge Advice

You have undergone surgery for the correction of pectus excavatum or sunken chest. You now have a steel bar that goes across your chest. The bar usually stays in place for about two to four years.

The surgeon will see you in an outpatient appointment a few weeks after the operation, to check that he or she is recovering well and that the operation site is healing properly.

You should call the hospital if in the first few days back at home:

- Your pain is getting worse and pain relief does not seem to help.
- You show any signs of infection – the incisions are red, sore, oozing or raised.
- You have a high temperature and paracetamol does not bring it down.
- You are not eating or drinking.

After this, if you have:

- a persistent cough
- breathing difficulties
- chest pain
- a chest injury, such as a severe knock to the ribcage

1.1 Getting back to normal

1.2 *There are some simple precautions you will need to take to make sure that you heal well and life gets back to normal as quickly and safely as possible.*

- You will need to avoid any strenuous activity for the first four to six weeks after surgery.
- After the operation and for the first month:
 - You must remember to bend at the hip, do not slouch or slump down when sitting & avoid twisting at your trunk.
 - You will need to sleep on your back & avoid lying on your side
- You should be able to go back to school when you feel able. Most patients stay off school for a few weeks after the operation.
- For the first 3 months:
 - No contact sports.
 - Avoid heavy lifting
 - No backpacks
 - No swimming
- Walking is excellent exercise and should be done frequently to build up your strength. You should begin walking as soon as you arrive home.

- If you are ever scheduled for a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) exam in the future, inform the radiologist that you have a metal work in your chest and they will let you know if the procedure can be performed.
- We recommend you should wear a Medicalert® bracelet or equivalent to inform doctors and paramedics. Recommended bracelet text: Steel bar in chest. CPR more force. Cardioversion ant/post paddle placement.

Letter for patient to travel

Date:

To whom this may concern,

RE: (patients' name)

(Patients' name) was admitted to The Harley Street Clinic on the (date of admission) for his/her chest wall reconstructive surgery.

He/She has had a steel work inserted underneath his/her breastbone which will need to be in place for indefinite time.

This may cause the alarms to go off at the Airport Security.

The medical and nursing team here at The Harley Street Clinic would ask that you deal with this in a sensitive and discreet manner.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on the numbers below.

Yours faithfully,

Name

Job title

Email

Contact details