Royal Manchester Children’s Hospital

Shunt Insertion/Revision
Discharge Information for Parents and Carers

Ward 78
Telephone: 0161 701 7800

Consultant:
Your child has had a shunt insertion/revision and is now ready for discharge – don’t worry!

The nursing staff will have explained all about the shunting system and hydrocephalus and you will have been given the Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (ASBAH) handout. Please ask any questions, as we are here to help.

Your child’s GP will be notified of their discharge from hospital and their Health Visitor, Special Care Baby Unit Nurse, School Nurse and Community Nurse will also be notified if they are involved in your child’s care.

You will receive an appointment in 6-8 weeks time asking your child to attend the out-patient clinic. If you have any problems at all or need general advice, please contact the ward or the Specialist Nurses (see page 6).

**Care of the wound**

Initially the area around the top end of the shunt may be slightly raised, but as the swelling settles down and your child’s hair grows back, you will not be able to notice this.

1. You should ensure the wound is kept clean and dry.

2. If the wound appears dirty or if you notice any excessive oozing i.e. blood or clear fluid then please ring the ward for advice, as the wound may have broken down.

3. At first you will need to take care when brushing your child’s hair, as the area may be tender.

4. Your child’s wound has dissolvable stitches. They will take up to 6 weeks to fall out. You can wash their hair with a mild shampoo 7 days after the operation. If your child has an abdominal wound they can bathe 7 days after the operation.
Your child has had stitches that need to be removed 7 – 10 days after the operation. This can be done by your GP, Practice Nurse or Community Nursing Team. The ward staff will discuss the arrangements with you. You can bathe your child and wash their hair once the stitches have been removed.

**Sports**

Your child should avoid contact sports, for example rugby and boxing until they have been seen in clinic. Your child should also avoid direct blows to their head.

**School**

If you are happy with your child’s recovery they may attend school within 2-3 weeks of their shunt insertion/revision.

**Pain relief**

Your child may feel dizzy or complain of headache in the initial period following their operation. This should soon settle if in doubt please contact the ward for advice.

If your child is in pain or irritable you can give them pain relief, for example **Paracetamol** or **Ibuprofen** (Junior).

**Travelling abroad**

It is safe for your child to fly 4 – 6 weeks after surgery if they are well. Please ensure your health insurance is up to date.

**Vaccinations**

Normally your child can have all their vaccinations, this will be discussed with you by the Specialist Nurse.
Complications

Sometimes complications can occur following the insertion or revision of a shunt.

Under 14 months
If your child is unwell and you think it may be a complication of the shunt you should observe them for:

- Irritability/crying.
- Not feeding as usual.
- Vomiting.
- Sleeping more than usual.
- Sunsetting eyes (downward deviation of the eyes).
- Soft spot (fontanelle) may appear tense and bulging.
- Head circumference may increase. Normally your Health Visitor will monitor this, however you may be taught how to do this.

Over 2 years
If the shunt is not working, your child may:

- Have headaches and may hold their head.
- Cry and be irritable.
- May vomit and refuse food.
- Have seizures.
- Have visual disturbances.
- Show a decline in academic performance at school.
- Sleep more than usual, lethargic.
What to do

1. Contact your GP first so they can eliminate any other problems i.e. throat infection, urine infection.

2. Ring the ward for advice at anytime.

3. If you are worried about your child take them to your nearest A&E Department.

Contact details

Ward 78
Telephone 0161 701 7800

Neurosurgical Specialist Nurses
Anita Butler
Carmel Geoghegan
Telephone 0161 701 1853
Monday to Friday 8.00 am to 4.00 pm

An answer machine is available, please leave a message and your call will be returned by the next working day.
Questions

We understand that there may be questions that either you or your child would like answering. Most of us forget what we were going to ask the doctor or the nurse.

Please feel free to ask questions. Write your questions in the box below.

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No Smoking Policy

The NHS has a responsibility for the nation’s health. Protect yourself, patients, visitors and staff by adhering to our no smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted within any of our hospital buildings or grounds.

The Manchester Stop Smoking Service can be contacted on Tel: (0161) 205 5998 (www.stopsmokingmanchester.co.uk).

Translation and Interpretation Service

Do you have difficulty speaking or understanding English?

الاضافس كي إنجليزيا تبوعكت كي ملكا بوعكت ببويه ؟ (BENGALI)
क्या आपको अंग्रेजी बोलने या समझने में कठिनाई हैं ? (HINDI)
تام یاکا کاھارفی چاکیلاير خربامان سیرکالی ایامه ؟ (GUJARATI)
کیوں یعنی وینگری ویسنگا نم میکرات ویلنگد ؟ (PUNJABI)
هل لديك مشاكل في فهم أو التكلم باللغة الإنجليزية؟ (ARABIC)

你有困難講英語或明白英語嗎？ (CANTONESE)

کیا آپوں امتیازی کچھ اور سہن لیں جس وقت میں آئے؟ (URDU)

☎ 0161 276 6202/6342

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Telephone 0161 701 7800

www.cmft.nhs.uk

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