

Managing your medicines after discharge from hospital



Information for patients and their
relatives or carers

This leaflet helps you to get the most from your medicines when you leave hospital. It gives you advice on what to do with your medicines and how to get more information about them.

Confirming your identity

Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your **name** and **date of birth** and check your **ID band**. If you don't have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address.

If we don't ask these questions, then please ask us to check.

Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

How do I get my medicine before I am discharged?

Before you leave hospital, a member of our pharmacy team, or a doctor or nurse, will talk to you about the medicines you will be given when you are discharged. They will check that you have at least two weeks supply of any medicines that you take long-term.

You will be given a copy of your discharge letter. This is often referred to as a TTA ('to take away') or AVS ('after visit summary'). This letter includes notes for your GP (home doctor) with information about your treatment, current medication and recommendations about your future care. A copy of this letter will be sent to your GP.

If you are unsure about whether or not to take a medicine, check your discharge letter or you can contact the King's Pharmacy Helpline on the number and email address on the back of this leaflet.

How do I take my medicine?

The label on your medicine and the patient information leaflet inside the box or packaging will tell you how and when to take it. Please read these before you take your medicine.

Some medicines have special instructions, such as whether you should take them before or after food. These instructions will also be on the label.

Your medicines have been prescribed for you. Do not share them with anybody else. Do not use medicines prescribed for someone else, even if you think they are the same as yours.



How do I get more supplies of my medicines?

Your GP usually receives your discharge letter automatically when you are discharged. They will update your records and give you a prescription for any medicines you are to continue. Please ensure you request a prescription before running out of any medicines you are to continue. It is always a good idea to contact your GP to let them know that you have been in hospital and to check they have received your discharge summary. They may wish to schedule a follow up appointment with you.

If you are under the care of a private doctor or specialist outside of the Trust, they will not automatically receive a copy of your discharge letter. You may wish to take a copy of your discharge letter with you to your next appointment, or to contact them directly to discuss any changes to your medicines.

Where should I store my medicines?

Try to keep your medicines in their original box to ensure they remain suitable for use and because the information on it may be important.

Always store them out of reach and sight of children, in a cool dark place.

Some medicines need to be stored in the fridge – it will tell you on the label.

If you have any old medicines at home and you are not sure whether you still need them, check with a member of your GP team.

What are side effects and do I need to worry about them?

Side effects are unwanted symptoms which you may have when taking your medication. They differ, depending on the medication you are taking. For example, some painkillers can make you constipated.

The team looking after you will balance the risks of side effects against the benefits to you before deciding with you which medicines to prescribe.

Your doctor or pharmacist will make sure you are aware if there are any important side effects to look out for when you start taking a new medicine.

You can also find out more about possible side effects by reading the information leaflet supplied in every box of medicine.

Only stop taking a medicine if your GP or a member of the team looking after you advises you to.

If you are worried about side effects, you should speak with your GP or a member of the team looking after you. If you become unwell, seek medical advice.

What if I need to come back into hospital?

If you need to come back into hospital, please bring an up-to-date list of your medicines with you so the pharmacy team looking after you can make sure you are prescribed the correct medicines. If possible, bring all your current medicines with you, including creams and inhalers.



What support is there after I leave hospital?

You can contact the King's Pharmacy Helpline by telephone or email using the details at the back of this leaflet. Your local pharmacy can also give you advice and support after you leave hospital.

You may also be eligible for a free NHS service at your local pharmacy: the Discharge Medicines Service (see below).

Discharge Medicines Service

If your medicines change while you are in hospital, you can be referred to your community pharmacist for additional support. It also allows pharmacists to pick up any problems you are having with your medicines.

If you are eligible, your hospital pharmacy team can refer you. These services are confidential and you will be able to talk to your community pharmacist in a private area in the pharmacy.

Who do I contact with queries and concerns?

If you have any questions about your medicines or would like more advice or information, please contact the Pharmacy Helpline. We can be contacted via email and are available for phone calls Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 4:30pm (excluding Bank holidays).

Pharmacy Helpline

King's College Hospital Pharmacy Helpline:

Tel: **020 3299 0588**

Email: **kch-tr.pharmacyhelpline@nhs.net**

Please note: we can only tell you about medicines prescribed for you at King's College Hospital Foundation Trust sites.



PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS:

Tel: **020 3299 3601**

Email: **kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net**

PALS at Princess Royal University Hospital, Farnborough Common, Orpington, Kent BR6 8ND

Tel: **01689 863252**

Email: **kch-tr.palspruh@nhs.net**

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Communications and Interpreting telephone line on 020 3299 4826 or email kch-tr.accessibility@nhs.net.