

## Oncology Directorate and **Cambridge Breast Unit**

# Information following discharge from clinic

This leaflet is designed to give you information that we hope will be useful to you following your discharge from clinic.

It contains advice about what to look out for together with information about where to go for help. It also includes information about hormone treatment and mammograms. We hope this information will help to answer some of your questions about "what happens next?"

If you have concerns or questions that are not covered in this booklet, please talk to your doctor, breast care nurse or Oncology breast nurse practitioner. The numbers for these are given at the back of the booklet.

### Symptoms to look out for

Many patients ask us what sort of symptoms that they should be looking out for, or problems that we feel you should report to us.

Many women are cured of their cancer by the treatment they have received and live to an old age without any cancer related problems.

You will get normal coughs and colds, aches and pains. You may have symptoms that cause you anxiety and concern. You may worry that the cancer has come back.

The following symptom guide may help you to know which symptoms to seek further advice about. If you have any of the following symptoms, for more than two weeks, which are getting worse rather than better, then please contact your GP.

- New changes in your breast / breasts
- Swelling of the arm (lymphoedema).
- Unexpected vaginal bleeding.
- Lumps around the collar bone (clavicle)
- Persistent back pain or pains in your bones which wake you at night.

### Advice and help

#### 1. Breast care nurses

If you need advice on breast prosthesis/bras, support groups or just want to talk things through, you can telephone the breast care nurses. They work Monday to Friday, 09.00 to 17.00 and regularly check their answerphones.

01223 586756      Answerphone

01223 586573

01223 596291

---

## 2. Oncology Breast Nurse Practitioner

If you have had treatment in the Oncology department and need further support or advice, then please telephone our Oncology Breast Nurse Practitioner:

**Telephone no:** 01223 217541 Voicemail

## 3. Getting back on track

The end of treatment can be a strange time. Although you will be glad it is all over it may seem like an anticlimax. Once treatment has finished you and the people close to you may be expecting things to get back to normal, but this can be easier said than done after what you have been through.

To help you get back on track the specialist nurses host a focus group on alternate months entitled 'Recoup your equilibrium'. They will invite you to come along once your treatment has finished and will discuss topics such as the after effects of treatment, medication and its effects plus sexuality and body image. As well as specialist nurses there will be a Dietitian and a physiotherapist to talk to you about diet and exercise. There will also be a chance to discuss privately, with a nurse, anything you want to talk through.

For information on the Focus group please contact the Breast Care Nurse on 01223 596291 or Breast Care Practitioner on 01223 596093

## 4. Psychological Support

We recognise that there will be times when you feel uncertain about the future.

Reactions to breast cancer treatment are individual and varied and there is no right or wrong way to feel. It may take some time to feel that you are in control of your life. If you need additional support after treatment this too can be discussed with you at a clinic appointment, or with your GP. The time it takes to recover from treatment can vary and again, this is an individual experience. We can refer you to our counsellor who is trained to work with patients who have had a diagnosis of breast cancer.

## 5. Self help groups

Every day, there are articles in newspapers and women's magazines, as well as radio and television discussions about breast cancer. Often myths and worrying facts make breast cancer seem something to be feared. Despite this, encouraging advances in the development of breast cancer treatment over the last decade have led to improved response rates and survival for women. If you are uncertain or worried about anything you have heard, or read, Cancerbackup or Breast Cancer Care are useful organisations to contact:

---

Cancerbackup: 0808 800 1234 [www.cancerbackup.org.uk](http://www.cancerbackup.org.uk)  
Monday to Friday, 09.00 to 17.00

Breast Cancer Care: 0808 800 6000 [www.breastcancercare.org.uk](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk)

## 6. Breast awareness

It is important to be Breast Aware for life and to be familiar with what is normal for you. Changes in the breast or scar areas that you have not noticed before should be reported. Examine your breasts regularly:

- If your periods have returned after treatment, then the week after your period is a good time each month to examine your breasts.
- If you are no longer having periods then try and examine your breasts the same time each month, for example the first day of the month is a useful time to remember.

It is important to feel confident and be able to examine your own breasts. If you are unsure of how to do this, please discuss this with the breast care nurse or nurse practitioner in the clinic who can help you with examination and breast awareness.

## 7. Diet and weight

We advise that you eat a balanced diet of fruit and vegetables, meat and dairy products. Recently a low fat diet has been shown possibly to be helpful. Breast cancer has not been proven to be linked with any particular food. It is also safe to drink alcohol in moderation.

Patients often find that they put a considerable amount of weight on following their treatment. This is an effect of the lack of oestrogen hormones and changed eating patterns. This weight gain may be minimised by taking exercise and watching the number of calories you eat. Weight gain has not been shown to be related to taking Tamoxifen.

## What happens next?

### 1. Blood tests and scans

Blood tests are not routinely taken after treatment. This may cause you some concern, as you will have become used to having a blood test during your treatment. It is not necessary to take a blood test once treatment has finished, unless any unexpected symptoms you describe are causes for concern.

Scans are not done on a regular basis either, as they can cause unnecessary anxiety and do not provide any useful information. If any new symptoms develop, the appropriate scan will be will be organised after you have been reviewed in the clinic.

## 2. Mammograms

### After the first five years:

- if you are **under the age of 50** we would recommend two yearly mammograms to the age of 50 then three yearly mammograms within the screening programme from 50 – 70. You will be sent the appointments in the post.
- After the first five years if you are **over 50** we advise you to have mammograms every three years, either within the screening programme (appointments will come in the post) if you are under the age of 70, or attending the breast unit if you are over the age of 70. If you are over 70 please telephone the breast unit to make an appointment.

**Telephone no:** 01223 217626

Results of the mammograms will be sent to you and your GP in the post.

### How to contact us:

- **Breast Care Nurses** 01223 586756  
01223 586573  
01223 596291
- **Oncology Breast Nurse Practitioner** 01223 217541
- **Prosthetic Nurse** 01223 348272
- **Cambridge Breast Unit main reception** 01223 217627
- **Oncology Centre** 01223 216551

### Other useful contacts

Cancerbackup 0808 800 1234  
Monday to Friday 09.00 to 17.00  
[www.cancerbackup.org.uk](http://www.cancerbackup.org.uk)

[www.addenbrookes.org.uk](http://www.addenbrookes.org.uk)

[www.breastcancercare.org.uk](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk)

0808 800 6000

[www.cancerhelp.org.uk](http://www.cancerhelp.org.uk)

Macmillan Cancer Line

0808 808 2020

[www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

Wallace Cancer Care

01223 596397

[www.wallacecancercare.org.uk](http://www.wallacecancercare.org.uk)

This document is also available in other languages, large print and audio format upon request – 01223 216032 or [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

Zamówienia prosimy składać pod numerem: 01223 216032 lub wysyłając e-mail: [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Polish

Se precisar desta informação num outro idioma, em impressão de letras grandes ou formato áudio por favor telefone para o 01223 216032 ou envie uma mensagem para: [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Portuguese

Если вам требуется эта информация на другом языке, крупным шрифтом или в аудиоформате, пожалуйста, обращайтесь по телефону 01223 216032 или на вебсайт [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Russian

若你需要此信息的其他語言版本、大字體版或音頻格式，請致電 01223 216032 或發郵件到: [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Cantonese

Bu bilgiyi diger dillerde veya büyük baskılı ya da sesli formatta isterseniz lütfen su numaradan kontak kurun: 01223 216032 veya asagidaki adrese e-posta gönderin: [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Turkish

এই তথ্য বাংলায়, বড় অক্ষরে বা অডিও টেপে পেতে চাইলে দয়া করে 01223 216032 নম্বরে ফোন করুন বা [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk) ঠিকানায় ই-মেইল করুন।

### Bengali



Addenbrooke's is smoke-free. Please do not smoke anywhere on the site. For advice on quitting, contact your GP or the NHS smoking helpline free, 0800 169 0 169

| Document history |  |             |         |
|------------------|--|-------------|---------|
| Authors          | Oncology Breast Nurse Practitioner   |             |         |
| Department       | Oncology Box 193, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Cambridge CB2 0QQ, <a href="http://www.addenbrookes.nhs.uk">www.addenbrookes.nhs.uk</a> |             |         |
| Contact number   | 01223 245151   |             |         |
| Published        | May 09   | Review date | Annual  |
| File name        | \\addfile\Oncology\Q A\Forms\Patient information\PIN1126_v5_CBU_discharge_clinic.doc   |             |         |
| Version number   | 5  | Ref         | PIN1126 |