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Getting moving again after a hospital stay

Leaving hospital and the first 14 days at home, with local help in Oxfordshire

For adults in Oxfordshire, their families, carers and anyone helping them at home. This edition adds a list of local help in Oxfordshire.

Your own care plan comes first. Follow the advice your hospital or care team gave you, including anything you must not do, and any advice about walking, exercise, eating or drinking. Use any equipment and help you were advised to use.

This is a checklist and a diary. It is not an exercise programme, and it is not a deadline for getting better.

When to get medical help: page 8. My 14-day record: page 10.

Before you leave hospital

Tick each one when it is sorted. Ask the ward team about anything you are unsure of.

- [ ] My journey home is arranged, and I can get into my home.
- [ ] Anyone helping me knows when I am coming home. Any care visits are confirmed.
- [ ] I have my discharge letter or care plan, and I understand the next steps.

- [ ] I know which of my medicines have changed, and how and when to take each one.
- [ ] I have the medicines I need, and I know how to get more before they run out.
- [ ] Any equipment I need is ready, and I have practised using it.
- [ ] I know what help I need with my bed, chair, toilet and any stairs.
- [ ] Any exercises, and anything I must not do, have been explained and written down.
- [ ] Food and drinks are sorted for when I get home.
- [ ] If I have been in hospital for a while, someone will put the heating on before I get home, so the house is warm when I arrive.
- [ ] If I have a personal alarm or falls sensor, it is charged and working.
- [ ] I know about any follow-up appointments, and who to call if there is a problem.
- [ ] I have talked about my worries, and asked whether short-term help at home would be useful.

My useful contacts

Hospital ward or discharge team, and phone:

GP surgery and phone:

Community or home care team and phone, if arranged:

Equipment contact and phone:

Follow-up appointment: date, time and place:

At home: little and often

Follow the advice from your own healthcare team first. Some of the points below may not be right for you, or may need changing. This is a general guide. If you are not sure something is safe for you, check with your healthcare team before you try it.

- Take it easy on your first day home. Getting home from hospital can be very tiring.
- Get dressed and sit out of bed for meals when you can, with help if you need it.
- Try not to sit or lie still for long spells. Move about in the way your care team advised, and walk only when it is safe, with your walking aid and any help you need.
- Do the exercises you were given, the way you were shown.
- Spread things out through the day and rest in between. Build up gradually. You do not have to do more every day.
- Have regular meals and drinks, following any advice you were given about diet, swallowing or how much to drink.
- If something new starts, or something gets worse, do not push through it. Ask for advice, and use the “When to get medical help” page.

Things I must not do, or help I need:

Something I would like to work towards, with my care team:

Making home safer

- Keep the places you walk clear of clutter, cables and loose rugs.
- Light the way to the toilet at night.
- Wear shoes or slippers that stay on securely and grip the floor.
- Put your personal alarm or falls sensor back on when you get home, and keep it charged. Keep your phone within reach.
- Use your walking aid as you were shown, and take your time getting up.
- Use a non-slip mat in the bath or shower, and any equipment recommended for you.
- Get help with lifting, reaching and heavy jobs.

Ask your GP or pharmacist whether any of your medicines could affect your balance. Do not change or stop a medicine without advice.

Where to get help in England and Wales

Short-term help at home. Ask the ward before you leave, or your GP surgery or council once you are home. You may be assessed for short-term care, often called reablement or intermediate care. When it is offered it is free, and it usually lasts no more than 6 weeks, depending on your needs.

Equipment and changes to your home. Your council's adult social care team can tell you how to ask for an assessment.

Worried about how you left hospital. Speak to the hospital team, or its patient advice service (PALS in England, the concerns team in Wales). For an urgent medical problem, use the "When to get medical help" page instead.

Local help in Oxfordshire

These services are for people who live in Oxfordshire. This includes Oxford, Banbury, Bicester, Witney, Abingdon, Didcot, Wantage, Wallingford, Thame and Henley-on-Thames. Oxfordshire County Council runs adult social care for the whole county.

Oxfordshire County Council adult social care. Call 01865 519800, Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4pm. You can also ask for an assessment with the online form. Out of hours, for emergencies that cannot wait, call the Emergency Duty Team on 0800 833 408. oxfordshire.gov.uk/adult-social-care

Short-term help after a hospital stay. Home First Oxfordshire helps people get home safely from hospital. Reablement is short-term help at home to get your skills and confidence back. It is free. You need to pay council tax in Oxfordshire or be registered with a GP here. If you need care after it ends, there is a check to see if you pay towards it. oxfordshire.gov.uk/reablement

Equipment. An occupational therapist can visit you at home to look at what would help. This can be small things, like a walking aid or a second stair rail. If you are eligible, they may be able to provide equipment. There are also equipment clinics around the county. Ask adult social care on 01865 519800. oxfordshire.gov.uk/homeassessment

Falls. If you have had a fall, or feel unsteady, tell your GP. Age UK Oxfordshire runs Stay Strong and Steady, a free first course for people at risk of falling or who have had a fall. It also runs strength and balance classes. The first class is a free taster. After that there is a charge. **01235 849 403**

Personal alarms. A personal alarm is worn on your wrist or round your neck. You press it to get help. Some also call for help if you fall. The council's assistive technology team gives free advice on alarms and other gadgets. You can book online. You can also buy an alarm yourself. If the council arranges one for you, you may be asked to pay towards it. oxfordshire.gov.uk/assistivetechnology

Help for carers. Carers Oxfordshire is a free service for adults who look after someone living in Oxfordshire. It gives advice and support, and can help with a carer's assessment. There is no charge for a carer's assessment. The CarersLine is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. You can leave a message at other times. **01235 424715** · carersoxfordshire.org.uk

Keep Safe and Well visit. A free visit from Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service. A firefighter checks your home for risks, fits smoke alarms or checks the ones you have, and gives advice on preventing falls. Ask for a visit online. For advice on choosing smoke alarms, call 08000 325999. oxfordshire.gov.uk/safeandwell

Citizens Advice Oxfordshire. Free advice on money, benefits, housing and other problems. The Adviceline is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm. **0808 169 6031** · caox.org.uk

Healthwatch Oxfordshire. Independent help finding health and care services. Tell them about your health or care, good or bad, to help services improve. **01865 520520** · healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Hospital patient advice (PALS). John Radcliffe, Churchill and Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre in Oxford: 01865 221473. The Horton General Hospital in Banbury has its own PALS office in the hospital. Community hospitals, such as Abingdon, Bicester,

Witney and Wallingford: Oxford Health PALS is free and open Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4.30pm, on 0800 328 7971.

Local contacts checked 16 November 2026. Services can change, so check before you rely on one.

When to get medical help

This is not a full list. Follow any extra advice in your discharge paperwork.

Call 999 now if you have

- Sudden chest pain or discomfort that does not go away, pain that spreads to your arm, neck, jaw or back, or chest pain with sweating, feeling sick, light-headed or short of breath.
- Severe difficulty breathing: gasping, choking or not able to get your words out.
- Pain and swelling in a leg together with chest pain or breathlessness. This can be a blood clot.
- Your face droops on one side, you cannot lift both arms, or your speech is slurred or muddled. These can be signs of a stroke. Call even if they stop.
- You have fallen and cannot get up, or you may have hurt your head, neck, back or hip.
- Bleeding that you cannot stop, for example from a wound or where you had stitches.

Do not drive yourself to A&E.

Call NHS 111, or get an urgent GP appointment, if you have

- New pain and swelling in one leg, sometimes with red or darker skin. This can be a blood clot.
- Breathlessness that comes on suddenly, or being more short of breath than usual.
- Coughing up blood.
- A wound or stitches that open up, or a wound that is bleeding, red, swollen, more painful or has pus coming out of it.
- You have fallen and are in pain, hurt or feeling unwell, but none of the 999 signs apply.

If any 999 sign applies, call 999 first.

Contact your GP or care team if

- You are worried about your walking or balance.
- You have had a fall, even if you were not hurt.
- Everyday things are getting harder to manage. Ask early. Do not wait for the diary to finish.

If you fall and cannot get up

- Call 999, or use your personal alarm. If you cannot reach either, shout or bang on the wall or floor.
- Keep warm. Cover yourself with anything within reach.
- Do not force yourself to get up. Follow the call handler’s advice about moving while you wait.
- Anyone with you should not try to lift you.

My 14-day record

Start on your first day at home. Tick the things that were right for you and that you managed, with help if needed. Write “n/a” where something does not apply. This is a record, not a test.

The days do not have to look the same. If something new starts or you are clearly getting worse, use the “When to get medical help” page rather than waiting for the diary to finish.

Keep this record and take it to any follow-up appointments.

Day	Date	Got dressed	Sat out for meals	Movement as advised	Exercises as advised	How I felt, or things to ask about
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						

My 14-day record (continued)

Day	Date	Got dressed	Sat out for meals	Movement as advised	Exercises as advised	How I felt, or things to ask about
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						

General information, not a personal treatment plan. Follow your own discharge advice. Prepared by Mobile Physiotherapist UK from NHS guidance. Sources checked 20 October 2026. General guidance checked by Claire Williamson, Chartered Physiotherapist, 27 October 2026. Oxfordshire contacts checked 16 November 2026. Free to print, copy and share.