**Side Effects of anaesthesia**

Side effects of general anaesthetics may include sickness, a sore, dry throat and flu-like aches and pains. These side effects can begin at different times, and sometimes not until days after the treatment. If you feel uncomfortable, then tell the nurses, as many of these side effects can be treated.

If you are accompanying a person who is receiving ECT Treatment

The ECT Suite at Bowmer Hospital is on the Countess of Chester Hospital site. The ECT Suite is located on the first floor. There is a lift to the right hand side of reception. ECT Treatment takes place on a Tuesday and Friday morning. The ECT Team start at 8 am, please contact the team on 01244 397357 if you have any concerns on the day of treatment.

The treatment and recovery takes about 3 hours and the person having treatment will be seen by a doctor before they can be discharged home.

If you plan to wait at Bowmer there is a café located on the ground floor which is open from 8 am. Another café and a shop are based on the Countess of Chester Hospital site, there is also a supermarket a short walk away.

If you would like help understanding this information or need support please speak to the ECT Team.

People who access our services are welcome to talk to the Team Manager if they are experiencing any problems with their care.

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**Feedback**

We welcome any suggestions you have, please send your comments, concerns, complaints and compliments to: Cheshire & Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, PALS, Complaints and Claims Team, 1829 Building, Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 1HJ.

For more information see [www.cwp.nhs.uk](http://www.cwp.nhs.uk)

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The information in the leaflet was valid at the date of production **Dec 2017** and is due for review in **Dec 2019**.

Leaflet code: AB-ECT-17-007
Introduction

This leaflet explains a little about what will happen to you when you come into hospital for electro convulsive therapy (ECT). This leaflet should be read in conjunction with the ECT leaflet, which staff will give to you. You are encouraged to ask your clinician to explain more about ECT, why they think you should have it, and the potential risks and side effects. ECT is only ever provided with an anaesthetic.

Preparation for ECT

Here is a list of things we ask you to do in preparation for your treatment:

- Do not have anything to eat or drink from midnight the night before your treatment except for clear water which you can have up to 6am.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothes
- Do not wear earrings, metal hairgrips, jewellery or contact lenses.
- Remove heavy make-up and nail varnish from fingernails.
- Avoid smoking or drinking before the treatment.

Some prescribed medicines can be taken with a sip of water but please seek advice from your care team.

Who will perform the ECT?

The treatment will be given by an administering professional and the anaesthetist will keep you well during it. You will normally meet the anaesthetist immediately before the treatment. They will have been informed about your general health. If they have any concerns about your general health, they may clarify them with you before your treatment.

What does the anaesthetist do?

Anaesthetists are doctors with specialist training in anaesthetics. There are various types of anaesthesia, but for ECT, a general anaesthetic is always used. This will keep you asleep, and pain free during the treatment.

The anaesthetist will discuss your needs with the administering professional. The anaesthetist will ask questions about your general health, particularly long standing problems, for example breathing difficulties or heart trouble, and temporary problems like colds. Sometimes you might need extra treatment to make you as fit as possible, even if this may delay your treatment.

The anaesthetist and Operating Department Practitioner will be your anaesthetic team. Before the anaesthetic starts you will be connected to some monitoring equipment. Several stickers will be placed on your head to help to monitor brain activity.

An anaesthetic will then be given via an injection into your hand. You may be asked to breathe some oxygen through a mask as you quickly drift off to sleep. While you are asleep, you will have the treatment. The anaesthetic team will look after you during this time.

The anaesthetist will meet you before your treatment, and stay with you during it, making sure you are safe to return to the recovery area or ward afterwards.

What sort of questions will the anaesthetist ask me?

The anaesthetist needs to know about your health, to plan a safe anaesthetic. You may be asked about previous operations, and whether you or anyone in your family has had any problems with an anaesthetic, or whether you suffer from any allergies such as skin rashes or breathing problems after taking medicines. The anaesthetist will need to know how much alcohol you drink, and whether you smoke, as this can affect your breathing during the anaesthetic. You will also be asked whether you have any caps, crowns or loose teeth, so that the ECT team can take particular care to protect these while you are asleep. Finally, please bring with you a list of your regular tablets and medicines, including contraceptive pills and medicines you buy yourself at the chemist or supermarket.

How will I feel after my treatment?

Within five to ten minutes you will wake from the anaesthetic. Different people react in different ways, but most are quite sleepy for some time after their treatment. Today, with modern anaesthetics, patients often remember little about going to sleep or the room where they wake up. You may be very sleepy, but you will be cared for by nurses specially trained to look after service users who have just had an anaesthetic. These nurses work with anaesthetists to make sure you are fully awake after treatment.

Risks of anaesthesia

Unexpected problems are very rare, but risk can never be completely removed. If you have other medical problems, the anaesthetist and psychiatrist will discuss these with you. Together you can decide whether to go ahead or not with the treatment.
If you require translation services or a copy of this document in other languages, audio tape, Braille or larger print, please speak to a member of CWP staff, e-mail info@cwp.nhs.uk or write to:

Communications, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Upton Lea, Countess of Chester Health Park, Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 1BQ.

**Feedback**

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