

RECOVERY FROM INJURY

Information on your injuries, healthcare team, hospital stay and discharge

Name:

Ward:

This handbook is designed to help guide you through your injury treatment and recovery, from hospital admission to discharge. Use this handbook during the early stages of your recovery to record important personal information. You can also use it as a reference if you are looking for additional support.

“I’d never been in hospital before, I’d never had an operation before. I’ve learned that you have to ask questions because that’s how you can take some responsibility for your own recovery.”

What's in this book for me?

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Acknowledgements

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My Health Information

Don't forget to ask questions during your stay!



My notes

Use this page to write down information you've been given, notes or questions, so that you don't forget!

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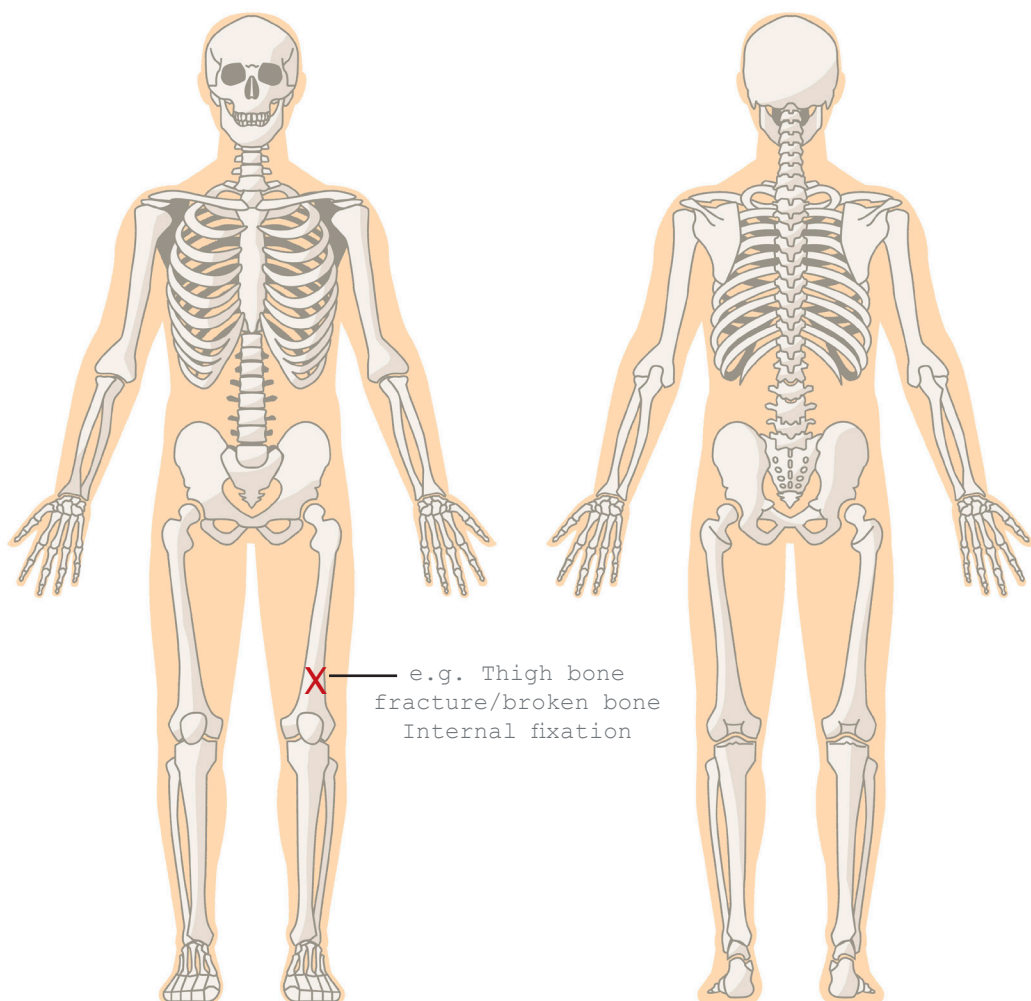
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My injuries

Ask to see your X-Rays. These can be printed out for you and may help you understand your injury better!

Ask your healthcare team to help you mark the location/s of your injuries on this body map



My injury management

Injuries	Management	Treating team/comments
<i>e.g. Thigh bone fracture/broken bone</i>	<i>Internal fixation</i>	<i>Orthopaedics - surgery went to plan - Mr John Smith</i>

My appointments



The Alfred, Specialist Consulting Clinics.....(03) 9076 2025

Alfred Health Pharmacy.....(03) 9076 2061

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My discharge checklist

Make a
follow-up GP
appointment

If you can't answer these questions, ask a member of your healthcare team before you are discharged.

Ask your nurse/treating team:

- ☐ Do I know what happened to me?
- ☐ Do I know what follow-up care or support I need?
- ☐ Do I know what needs to happen before I go home?
- ☐ How I am leaving the hospital?
- ☐ Do I know how long I need to take medication for?

Ask your pharmacist:

- ☐ Do I understand what all my medicines are and how to take them?
- ☐ Can I reduce or change my medication without consulting my GP?

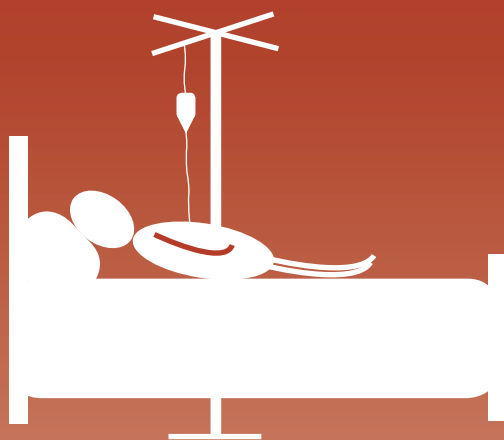
Ask your physiotherapist or other allied health team member:

- ☐ Do I know what activities I can do when I get home?
- ☐ Do I know the activities that I must NOT do when I get home?
- ☐ Can I drive? When can I return to driving?

General questions to ask:

- ☐ Do I have follow-up appointments with all the teams that have been involved with my care?
- ☐ When can I return to work/study? Do I have the work certificates I need?
- ☐ Do I know how I will travel to my follow-up appointments?
- ☐ Do I know where to find more information about my recovery?
- ☐ Is there someone available to help at home with activities such as cooking, cleaning and washing?

In Hospital



Clothing in hospital

Your clothing in hospital is not always limited to the hospital gown you are provided. If possible, arrange someone to bring in **loose clothing** and **stable footwear** so that you are able to move around on the ward more comfortably.



Button-up short
sleeved shirts



zip-up jackets



Loose fitting pants

Moving around the ward, attending therapy sessions and increasing your independence by going outside with family members may all be more comfortable if you are wearing your own clothes.

Being as active as possible in hospital will help with your recovery.



Ask your healthcare team what clothes are best for you!

Smoking, drugs and alcohol

The Alfred is a 'totally smokefree' zone. This means smoking (including e-cigarettes) is not permitted within the boundary of Alfred Health sites.

Quitting smoking, drugs or alcohol is an important way you can improve your health and recovery.

Smoking is associated with slower healing of wounds and bones, wound infection and wound breakdown.

It is important that you tell your healthcare team if you drink alcohol regularly, smoke or use drugs, as these substances may affect your treatment.

We are able to help manage your drug and alcohol use in-hospital and can refer you for ongoing help once you are discharged home.



Please speak to a member of your healthcare team if you would like to discuss your options.

These resources may also be useful:



The Alfred 'Smoke Free Clinic':

<https://www.alfredhealth.org.au/services/smoke-free-clinic>

Quitline



<https://www.quit.org.au>

For immediate help call: 13 7848

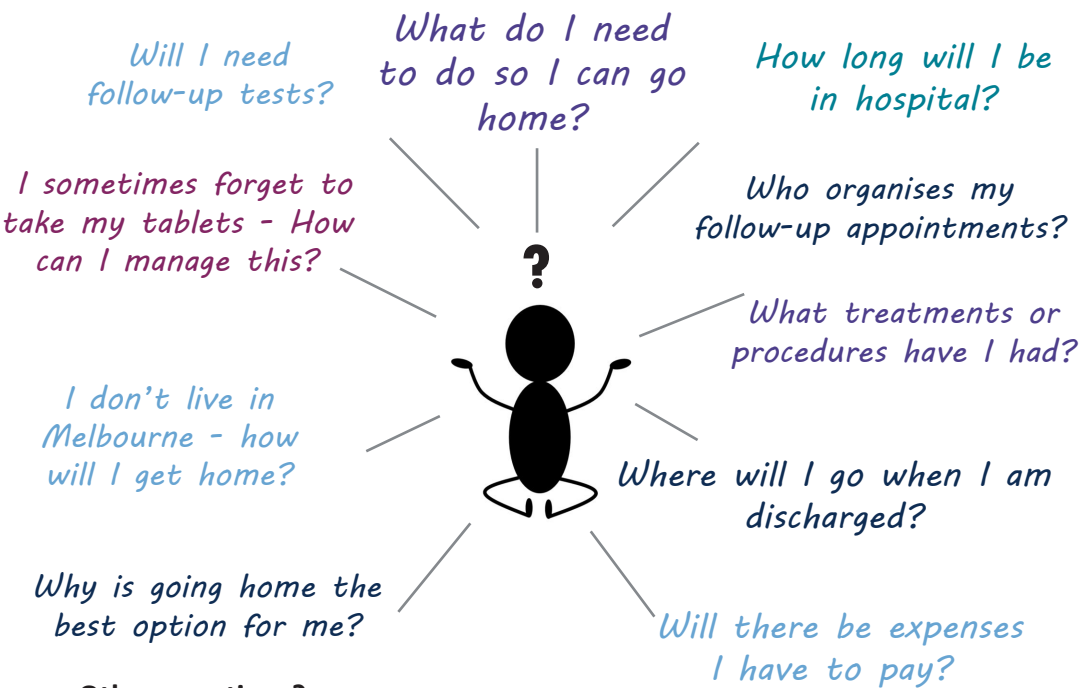


Alcohol and drugs - information and support

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/ServicesAndSupport/alcohol-and-drugs--dependence-and-addiction>

What to ask your doctors and nurses

If you are worried, don't understand something or just want to know more you should always ask a member of your healthcare team!



Other questions?

How long will it take me to recover?

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What to ask your physiotherapist

A physiotherapist will see you during your stay at The Alfred. Trauma physiotherapists help you with walking, exercises, discharge planning, education, equipment and any respiratory complications.

*Why is it important
that I do exercises after
I have been injured?*

When can I get up?

*When can I play
sport again?*

*Are there activities I
should avoid? If yes,
for how long?*

*What should I get
help for?*

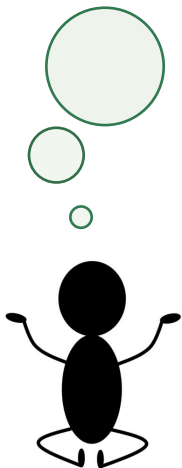
*Can I do exercises on
my own or do I need
supervision?*

*Where will I go after I
am discharged?*

*What exercises can I
do in bed?*

*What do I need
to do in hospital
to go home?*

*Can you write down
or demonstrate what
exercises I should do?*



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What to ask your occupational therapist

An occupational therapist may see you in hospital to help you get back to doing your everyday activities.

What do I need to do so I can be discharged?

How will I get dressed when I can't put weight through my arm and/or leg?

How can I look after my children?

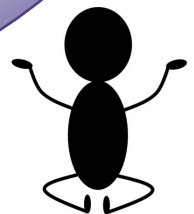
How can I manage household tasks including cleaning, laundry and preparing my meals?

What do I need to consider when returning to work or study?

Will I need equipment or aids to help me safely return to my home?

How will I shower with my brace/cast/splint?

How can I get in and out of my car to attend my appointments?



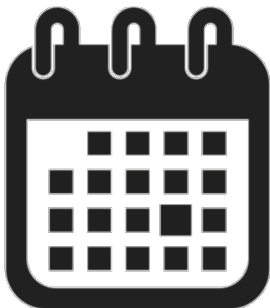
Return to work or study

Depending on your workplace or education facility, you may be able to return to work in some capacity, even if you are not fully recovered.

1 Working or studying is good for you

Getting back to work or study is part of your recovery and rehabilitation process. Make your return to work or study a priority.

Talk to your healthcare team in hospital about your plans to return to work.



2 Start planning your goals early

What are your long term work goals? The earlier you make contact with your employer or education facility the easier it will be to meet your goals.

Return to work or study

3 Talk to your GP

Ask your GP about who can help you with your goal to return to work or study. You may need a referral to a Return To Work Coordinator* who can help you to establish a plan (within the first four months is best). This will make the process easier and less stressful for you. Your GP is also able to provide you with a Certificate of Capacity if you require one, which states your injury, illness, capacity to work and what you cannot do at work.

There are lots of **people who can help you** with your return to work or study goals.

4 Stay connected

It is important to keep in touch with your workplace or education facility while you are recovering as this will make the transition back to work or study easier. Keep your contacts informed of your progress and let them know what they can do to support you.



*If you have been injured in a road or traffic incident you may be entitled to help from a TAC Return to Work Coordinator

Managing pain and discomfort

Pain is a common issue after injury. It can be managed in many ways and each step of your recovery may need a different strategy. Initially, you will be given medication to keep you comfortable.

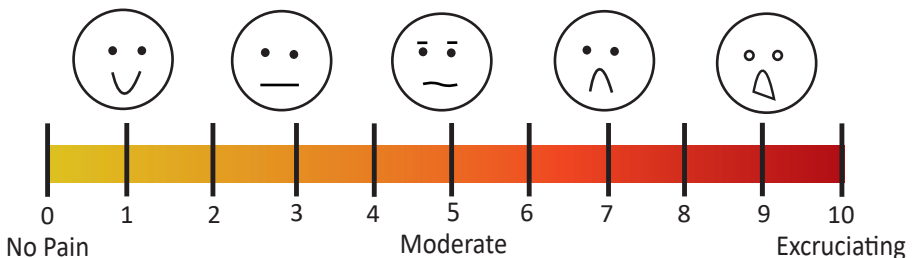
If your pain continues or gets worse you must let your healthcare team know.

There are important benefits of taking pain relief medication but there may be some side effects. Common side effects from strong pain medications can include:

- Drowsiness or a 'light headed' feeling
- Feeling sick
- Constipation

You will not always be pain-free but it is important that your pain is tolerable so that you can manage activities and participate in the care provided by your team. Options such as distracting yourself with music, relaxation breathing or some gentle activity can be beneficial and may help reduce your pain.

If you regularly use illicit drugs, this will affect the healthcare team's ability to manage your pain. Please let a member of your healthcare team know so your pain management plan is appropriate to your needs.



Feelings/emotions

Having changing emotions is completely normal after a serious injury. Your emotional and mental health are just as important to your recovery as your physical health.



There are many things you can do to help your emotional wellbeing after your injury, such as:

- Acknowledging your emotions - **it is okay** to feel angry, sad or worried
- Take things in small steps and day by day
- **Talk to someone** you feel comfortable with about how you are feeling
- Keep in close contact with your family or support team
- Do activities that you find relaxing and are within your capabilities. e.g. listening to music
- If you are able, do some **gentle activities** - go for a walk around the ward or go outside

If problems or concerns persist, talk to your treating team. There are specialists available and follow-up can be organised after discharge.

Personal stories and advice from injured patients can be found here:



<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/servicesandsupport/major-trauma>



Podcast - Picking up the pieces
FREE on spotify, iTunes, PlayerFM and more!

BeyondBlue - Info and help on managing mental health, drugs and alcohol



<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/drugs-alcohol-and-mental-health>



Useful Information



What comes next?

Your General Practitioner (GP) is the best place to go if you need help managing your recovery after discharge.

- 1 It may take you longer to do things at home immediately after being discharged from hospital. Allow yourself extra time to do things - this can reduce your pain, discomfort and anxiety.
- 2 Your GP is the best place to go if you need support after hospital. Your GP can help you manage your:
 - Pain/discomfort
 - Emotional well-being
 - New symptoms or side-effects
 - Return to work
- 3 Start thinking about your long-term goals now that you've been discharged. This will help keep you focussed and moving forward in your recovery
- 4 Only go back to hospital if you are in a situation that you feel is a medical emergency or if your GP recommends that you need to go back to hospital.



TAC and Worksafe

For information on transport related injuries:

<https://www.tac.vic.gov.au/>

For general enquiries call 1300 654329

For workplace related injuries:

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/>

For general enquiries call (03) 9641 1555



Where to go for further support



theAlfred

The Alfred, Specialist Consulting Clinics.....	(03) 9076 2025
Ward 5 West.....	(03) 9076 3625
Allied Health Reception.....	(03) 9076 3450
Trauma Pharmacist number.....	(03) 9076 2061

For more hospital information after you have been discharged visit:

<https://www.alfredhealth.org.au/the-alfred/patients-families-friends/when-you-leave>



Transport
Accident
Commission

Information and help with transport accident claims and support

www.tac.vic.gov.au

For general enquiries call 1300 654 329



BetterHealth
Channel

For more information about healthy living, wellbeing and recovery from illness

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/servicesandsupport/major-trauma>

Work



Information about making a claim if you were injured in the workplace

www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

For general enquiries call (03) 9641 1555



24 hour assistance, phone or support services for family members and friends looking after people with care needs

<https://www.carersvictoria.org.au/>

AfterTrauma

An online community resource for trauma patients.

This site is UK based but offers useful information for injured patients

Free mobile phone app available

www.aftertrauma.org

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



We acknowledge and thank the Transport Accident Commission Victoria for their support of this project.



MONASH University

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