

We know that facing surgery can be overwhelming, so we've put together this checklist of items to take with you to make your stay in hospital more comfortable. See our separate checklists **Preparing for Recovery After Surgery** and **Pre-operation Checklist** for additional advice about having surgery.

The information and content provided here is intended for information and educational purposes only. It is not an exhaustive list of points to think about at this stage of your treatment and it is not intended to substitute for professional medical advice. Please speak to your medical team about any queries in relation to your personal situation.



HELPING YOU THROUGH & BEYOND BREAST CANCER

WHAT TO PACK FOR YOUR SURGERY



FUTURE DREAMS
FOR THOSE TOUCHED BY BREAST CANCER



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NOBODY SHOULD FACE BREAST CANCER ALONE

Future Dreams Breast Cancer Charity provides practical and emotional support for those diagnosed with breast cancer, promotes breast health awareness and funds vital secondary breast cancer research.

At Future Dreams House you will discover an open, inclusive and safe space where you can be yourself, access the practical support you need and benefit from peer support from the point of diagnosis, throughout your treatment and beyond.

For details on all our in-person and virtual services please go to [futuredreams.org.uk](https://www.futuredreams.org.uk)

FUTURE DREAMS HOUSE

61 Birkenhead Street, London, WC1H 8BB

Nearest station: Kings Cross St Pancras - 3 minute walk

T 020 4558 2950 E info@futuredreams.org.uk

Registered charity number in England and Wales: 1123526



WHAT TO PACK FOR YOUR SURGERY

○ WASH BAG OF TOILETRIES

Things such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, regular facial toiletries or face wipes, soap, dry shampoo. An electric toothbrush requires less movement so is a good option.

○ NIGHTWEAR

You'll be wearing a hospital gown for most of your stay but if you prefer to have your own nightwear for a longer stay then ideally take pyjamas with a top which is easy to open from the front. Short sleeves are best as these are easiest for the nurses to take blood pressure in the night.

○ DRESSING GOWN AND SLIPPERS

You can wear these as you walk to the operating theatre. Make sure your slippers don't have slippery soles and avoid taking flip flops because you'll be wearing surgical stockings. And slip-on slippers are best because you may struggle to bend down after surgery.

○ SOMETHING TO DO

Such as a book, magazine, downloaded film on an iPad/phone and headphones. If you have noise cancelling headphones you might want to take them because hospitals are noisy all the time. Note that some hospitals have no internet access.

○ PHONE AND CHARGER

Either a plug in one (with an extra long cable to reach from plug point to your bed) or a pre-charged battery pack.

○ SNACKS

Think about how long you are going to be in hospital and how much you will need to bring. Consider things like crackers, cereal bars and biscuits.

○ DRINKS

You'll usually be given water and tea or coffee but you might like to take squash to add to the water plus any drinks you prefer such as juice boxes, bottles of water and herbal tea bags.

○ WATER BOTTLE WITH NON-DRIP SPOUT OR STRAWS

These will help you drink more easily without having to sit up to sip.

○ NOTE PAD AND PEN

For jotting down instructions and information from the nurses/surgeon.

○ SMALL TOWEL

For when you are able to wash.

○ A SMALL CUSHION

Something that you can use in the car on the way home between the seatbelt and your chest

○ CLOTHES

You'll want to have something easy to wear when you leave hospital, ideally comfortable, loose fitting clothes that button up or zip up at the front, plus flat, easy to slip on shoes or boots. A long slouchy cardigan can help conceal the drain bags.

○ POST SURGERY BRA

Some hospitals provide these free of charge but you can shop around for something soft, comfortable and front fastening or you can ask your surgeon for a recommendation. Future Dreams can give advice.

○ SMALL PILLOWS

If you've had lymph nodes removed from under your arm then a small pillow can provide comfort and support here.

○ BAGS FOR THE DRAINS

If you will be having drains fitted then it can help to have a couple of lightweight shoulder bags to carry these as you move around.

○ DETAILS OF YOUR PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

Take details of your prescription medication to give to the nurses.

○ ARNICA CREAM

This can help with the bruising. But it's important to check with your surgeon before using it.

○ A LITTLE BAG TO HANG OFF THE BED

So you can keep things within easy reach such as your phone, tissues, snacks and so on.

○ EYE MASK, EAR PLUGS, HAND CREAM, TISSUES, HAND SANITISER, THROAT LOZENGES, SMALL TRAVEL FAN, LIP BALM, HAIR BANDS AND WET WIPES

These will all help to make your stay in hospital more comfortable.



Visit futuredreams.org.uk/information-hub for further practical tips, expert advice, personal stories and signposts to further information for people impacted by breast cancer, provided by people impacted by breast cancer.