

## Discharge advice: Spinal Anaesthesia and Epidural Analgesia

Complications resulting from an epidural or spinal anaesthesia are rare and would have been discussed with you before the procedure. However, when they do occur, they can be very serious, and it is therefore very important to quickly identify and treat any problems. Please be aware of the following signs and/or symptoms for up to eight weeks following your epidural or spinal anaesthesia:



### Headache

- Worse when you are sitting up or standing and eases when you lie down
- Not relieved with simple pain medication (such as Panadol or Nurofen)
- Sensitivity to bright light



### Backache

- Backache or pain over the site of the epidural/spinal that is getting worse (especially if the site feels hot, is red or pain moves into buttocks/legs)
- Note: It is not uncommon to have a small bruise over the epidural/spinal area for a few days that may be tender to touch



### Weakness or altered sensation

- Could be numbness, weakness, tingling or pins and needles
- Difficulty standing, walking or moving legs



### Bowel or bladder problems

- Loss of control of bladder or bowels
- Difficulty going to the toilet



### Generally unwell

- Redness, swelling, discharge (pus or liquid) at epidural/spinal site
- Fever and/or neck stiffness
- Feeling generally unwell despite an otherwise good recovery may be an indication of an infection at the epidural site

**If you notice any of these symptoms, please contact the Acute Pain Service immediately for advice. You may be requested to return to the hospital or to see your local GP.**

#### Acute Pain Service

Phone: 07 3413 7930

Monday to Friday – 7.30am to 4.30pm

#### Ipswich Hospital Switchboard

Phone: 07 3810 1111

After hours, ask to speak to the Anaesthetist on call

#### **Interpreter Services**

available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at no charge. Please contact our staff for assistance.

