

Spinal Unit - Town Trips (page 1 of 2)

What is the purpose of a town trip?

Town trips form part of your rehabilitation and usually occur in Phase 3, when you are sitting in your chair for most of the day. Going into Salisbury city centre is an important step as you prepare to leave the confines of the Unit and return to everyday life.

We hope you will ask one of your family or a friend to go with you. They will be shown the best way to help you on your trips out. On your first visit a trained member of the therapy team will accompany you and show you how to put into practice the skills and techniques you have learned in the Unit. It is also an opportunity to familiarise yourself with the layout of Salisbury so that you can enjoy further visits with family and friends.

You will be able to join the trips organised by the 2 part-time recreational assistants who are trained to drive the Spinal Unit wheelchair minibus (complete with ramp). They have organised a range of social activities and outings and encourage all patients on the Spinal Unit to join in, either individually or in small groups. They will contact you once you have completed your town trip.

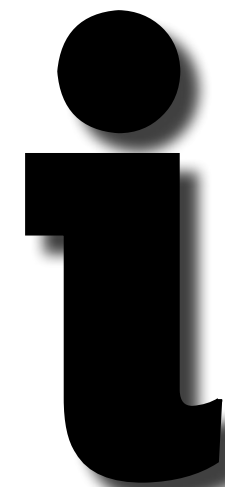
We aim to make these town trips an enjoyable occasion which offer you the chance to gain confidence in techniques such as wheelchair skills, buying items in shops or cafes, and telling friends/family when you need assistance.

Things to consider:

- town trips take up to 2 hours so this can affect pain and fatigue levels.
- the bus ride is bumpy and the uneven ground in town may affect any spasms.
- if your spinal cord injury is at level T6 or above, you must be aware of the risk of Autonomic Dysreflexia, and have the relevant medication with you on the trip.
- discuss (with your consultant) whether you need a brace or collar for transport.
- you need to think about your bowel and bladder management before you leave the ward.
- powered wheelchairs are not allowed away from hospital grounds for safety reasons. A back-up manual wheelchair can be organised

Spinal Unit

 **01722 336262 ext 2071**



If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: customercare@salisbury.nhs.uk

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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by the therapy team.

- the bus ramp is steep; consider purchasing pushing gloves from the Occupational Therapy (OT) department.
- please let your therapist know if you suffer from motion sickness.

The member of staff accompanying you will be there to help you according to your needs and abilities.

Transport

- the public bus leaves every 10 minutes. The journey takes approximately 10 minutes
- the bus fare is £3.50 (refundable for patients only)
- bring a bus pass if you have one
- wheelchairs face towards the back of the public bus
- alternative arrangements such as the Unit's minibus or a wheelchair accessible taxi can be considered on an individual basis.

What might I need to take on a town trip?

- spending money
- bladder management equipment
- radar key (access to disabled toilets)
- medication
- weather appropriate clothing and footwear
- collar/brace
- pushing gloves
- bottle of water
- hospital and ward telephone numbers.

We have ponchos and large umbrellas available in OT if the weather is wet. We leave you to decide whether to go on a trip if the weather is particularly poor on the day.

Once you have been on your town trip you need to make sure that you have the hospital and ward telephone number to hand for future trips, in case you are delayed. We will ask you to sign in and out for this and all subsequent trips.

If you have any concerns about your town trip please speak to your therapist.