



# Pneumothorax Discharge Advice

## What is a Pneumothorax?

A spontaneous pneumothorax happens when air collects in the pleural space (the space between the lung and chest wall). The trapped air in the pleural space prevents the lung from filling with air, and the lung collapses. This can happen in one or both lungs.



## Management of a Spontaneous Pneumothorax

Small pneumothoraces may resolve over time without intervention.

Larger pneumothoraces will usually need to have the air drawn out, either using a needle and syringe, or by insertion of a chest tube into the pleural space to let the air drain out.

## Discharge Advice

- An appointment would have been made for you to return to hospital for follow-up of the pneumothorax. Do remember to come back for review as planned.
- If at any time you develop new or increased shortness of breath or chest pain, call 995 for an ambulance or seek medical care at the Emergency Department immediately.
- You must avoid air travel until the pneumothorax has resolved completely and your doctor gives the all clear to fly. It is also advisable to avoid strenuous activity.
- Diving should be permanently avoided after a pneumothorax, unless you have had bilateral surgical pleurectomy.
- If you smoke, it is important to stop as it would put you at greater risk of recurrence of a pneumothorax.



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For appointments and enquiries,  
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