

Driving

You must not drive for 24 hours following your anaesthetic. It is advisable not to drive until your stitches have been removed, to avoid damaging your wound.

Further appointments

The date and time of your outpatients' appointment will be sent to you through the post.

Reference source

- www.orthoinfo.org

These notes will not cover everything. If you want to know more, please ask.

Contact details

If you require further advice, please contact:

Day Surgery Unit

Telephone: 01483 406783, Mon–Fri, 8am–6pm

Surgical Short Stay Unit

Telephone: 01483 406828

Pre-assessment Clinic

Telephone: 01483 464152

Out of hours advice

Call 111 (formerly NHS Direct)
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm, Mon to Fri

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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Removal of metalwork

Day Surgery Unit

Surgical Short Stay Unit



Patient information leaflet

What is removal of metalwork?

This procedure involves the removal of screws, plates and/or wires that have been inserted into the broken bone to help heal the break.

An incision is usually made through the scars left by the original operation. The metalwork is removed and the wound is closed with stitches.

Why is this required?

Once the broken bone has healed, it is sometimes recommended that metalwork be removed in the following cases:

- If you are likely to break the bone again (e.g. high risk sports); a break occurring with the metalwork still in place can be more complicated and serious
- If the metalwork itself is causing discomfort and pain under the skin
- Some Armed Services personnel are required to be free of internal metalwork

Are there any alternatives?

The alternative is simply to leave the metalwork in place. If it is not causing direct discomfort, it could stay in place indefinitely. However, for the above reasons, your consultant has recommended that the metalwork be removed.

Potential risks and complications

Complications associated with this procedure are rare, but may include:

- **Infection.** This is an unusual but potentially serious complication. You may be given antibiotics to prevent it. If your wound becomes swollen, tender and reddened, or you notice a discharge from it, contact your GP or the Day Surgery Unit for advice.
- **Bleeding.** A small amount of oozing from the wound is normal. However, if your bleeding becomes excessive, put gentle pressure on it and seek medical advice.
- **Bruising** to nerves may occur during the operation, particularly if your metalwork is in the forearm. This may result in areas of numbness in the hand. Permanent damage is very rare.

After your operation

Will it hurt?

Although the procedure to remove the metalwork is a good deal less traumatic than the procedure to put it in, some discomfort is to be expected. Every effort will be made to keep you comfortable during your recovery on the ward. You will be provided with painkillers to take home; these will carry a prescription charge unless you are exempt.

Take the painkillers for at least the next 48 hours to stay on top of the pain.

Elevation

Keep your limb rested up over the next couple of days to help reduce swelling. If the metalwork was in your arm, the Unit may provide you with a sling to take home.

Your wound and stitches

Your wound will be closed with stitches and covered with a dressing and a support bandage. You may remove the bandage after 48 hours.

Keep your stitches covered, clean and dry until they have been removed, to help prevent infection.

Your stitches may require removal in 10-14 days at your outpatients' appointment or at your GP Practice, your nurse will inform you.

Activity and work

You are encouraged to use your limb as normally as possible, as this will help to strengthen the healed bone. However, avoid any activity that puts undue stresses on the bone e.g. contact sports, for at least 6 weeks after the operation.

You are strongly advised to take at least 2-3 days off work to allow recovery from your anaesthetic. It is usually necessary to take two weeks off to allow your wound to heal. The Day Surgery Unit can provide you with a doctor's certificate for time off work if required.