

Any questions?

Please use this space to jot down any question you would like the doctors or nurses to answer.

Contact details

If you require further advice, please do not hesitate to contact the Day Surgery Unit.

Day Surgery Unit

Telephone: 01483 406783

Monday–Friday, 8am–6pm

Out of hours advice

Call 111 (formerly NHS Direct)

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Surgical Short Stay Unit

Telephone: 01483 406828

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
Monday to Friday

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

Past review date: January 2017

Future review date: January 2020

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PIN170112–1184



Upper limb surgery



Day Surgery Unit Surgical Short Stay Unit

Your operation is:

This leaflet contains advice regarding how to take care of your hand or arm after your surgery.

If you have any questions or worries relating to the operation itself, you will have the opportunity to speak to the Surgeon before the operation takes place.

Also, please feel free to ask the Nursing staff any questions you wish.

Are there any alternative procedures?

This leaflet covers a wide variety of procedures therefore there may be alternative interventions, so please ask your Doctor.

What are the potential risks and complications?

Complications during and following this procedure are rare. They include:

- **Excessive bleeding and/or swelling.** Pressure and a cold compress (e.g. a packet of frozen peas) may help relieve these symptoms. If you are concerned, telephone the Day Surgery Unit or see your GP.
- **Infection of the wound sites – this is a rare occurrence.**

If your wound becomes very tender, red or swollen, contact the DSU or your own GP for advice.

What happens after my operation?

Will the operation hurt?

Some discomfort is to be expected after any type of surgery. You may have local anaesthetic injected into the wound area to keep it comfortable to start with. You will be provided with painkillers as required while on the Day Surgery Unit.

You may be prescribed painkilling tablets to take home. These carry a prescription charge unless you are exempt.

Wound care

There will be a dressing over your stitches. You may also have a bandage covering the wound. The bandage can be removed 48 hours following surgery. Your stitches must be kept covered, clean and dry until they have been removed in 10-14 days. Some may be dissolvable and will fall out when ready.

Some swelling is to be expected for a few days; this is temporary. Resting the arm up as much as possible for the next couple of days will help keep the swelling to a minimum.

If your wound becomes red, swollen or very tender, or develops a discharge, please contact the Day Surgery Unit or your own GP for advice.

Elevation and activity

Keep your arm rested up in the sling provided for the next 2–3 days. Rest your arm on pillows or cushions to sleep.

You may move your hand or arm as much as is comfortable to do so – the nursing staff will advise you. Avoid any activity that may pull or damage your stitches until they have been removed.

When can I return to work?

You are advised to take at least two days off work to allow you to recover from your anaesthetic. If your job is manual, you may need between 4 – 6 weeks off work.

The Unit can provide you with a doctor's certificate if required.

Am I able to re-commence driving?

You must not drive for at least 24 hours after a general anaesthetic. You must be fully mobile and comfortable, and able to operate the steering wheel and gear stick comfortably and safely, before driving again. **This may take 1–2 weeks.** The Driving Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) advise you to ring your insurance company to inform them when you are driving again.

Will I require a follow-up appointment?

You will be sent an appointment to see the surgical team in Outpatients a few weeks after your surgery.

Reference source

Mr Magnussen, Consultant, RSCH.