



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Surgery to repair soft tissue injuries to the hand

Mr C Pailthorpe

Mr Z Rahimtoola

Miss C Middleton

Information for patients

This leaflet outlines what will happen once you and your surgeon have decided to go ahead with surgery for your hand injury. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to your doctor or nurse.

What happens next?

You will be contacted by telephone to inform you of the date of your surgery, which will be as soon as possible after the injury. You will be informed as to the time and location that the surgery will take place and given instructions to ensure that you are fully prepared.

On the day of your operation

When you arrive at the hospital the theatre nurses will check you in. A consultant hand surgeon who will then assess you and explain the details of the surgery that is to be carried out. You will also be assessed by an anaesthetist. Most of these operations are performed under a regional block. This means that you will be awake but the whole of your arm is numb allowing us to perform the surgery without the need for a general anaesthetic. The block will also provide good pain relief for after your surgery.

After your operation

You will be monitored to ensure that you are safe to return home and you will need to have someone to collect you after your surgery, as you will not be fit to drive yourself. The 'Are you BLOCK SAFE?' section gives advice following a nerve block after the operation.

Physiotherapy

If you have injured one of the tendons in your hand or wrist you will require a period of specialist physiotherapy which will involve careful splinting in combination with controlled exercise. This is a vital part of the surgery to prevent the tendon repair from failing by over use and also preventing long-standing stiffness that can occur by not moving the fingers enough. An appointment will be arranged prior to discharge.

Information about your anaesthetic

Are you BLOCK SAFE?

As part of your operation you have had a regional anaesthetic block (a numb arm) to make you more comfortable. To look after your limb till the block wears off we ask that you check four things while on the ward or at home.

S

Slings and scalding

Ensure a safe limb, take care to wear your sling, avoid scalding your numb arm / leg. Protect your numb limb from any pressures areas with a pillow.

A

Analgesia / painkillers

Make sure that you take all your regular / prescribed painkillers even if you are comfortable now, in readiness for when the block / numbness wears off, so that you are not suddenly in pain or discomfort.

F

Falls

While limb is blocked it may affect your balance. Be careful when getting up or walking that you do not fall.

E

Ensure block receding

If your limb is not back to normal / still feels numb 36 hours after your operation contact: (0118) 322 7068 between 9am and 4pm and we will arrange to see you.

Dr Kelly Place, Anaesthetic Consultant

How to find the hospital

Royal Berkshire Hospital,
London Road, Reading
Berkshire RG1 5AN
Tel: 0118 322 5111



West Berkshire Community
Hospital, London Road,
Benham Hill, Thatcham
Berkshire RG18 3AS
Tel: 01635 273300
Fax: 01635 273306



Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
Reading Hand Unit, Department of Orthopaedics
www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

This document can be made available in other languages
and formats upon request.

Reviewed: October 2018.
Review due October 2020.