

Caring for your hand after surgery

What is normal to expect post-surgery:

- You may have a reduction in movement for the first 24 hours.
- You may experience slight pain or discomfort.
- Taking regular simple pain relief for the first 24-48 hours is advised (avoid anything containing Aspirin as this may increase the risk of bleeding). If you are unsure on the best analgesics for you, please contact your local pharmacy.
- Elevating your arm will assist with the reduction in swelling and pain. Please utilise the sling as advised. At night, please remove your sling and elevate your arm on pillows.
- Regular exercise of your shoulder and elbow will prevent joint stiffness.
- Please keep your dressing clean and dry. Avoid disturbing the dressing unless told to complete your own wound care by the Nurse or Doctor.
- When bathing, please cover the dressing with a waterproof covering (ie plastic bag or Clingfilm) to prevent getting it getting wet.

Monitoring the wound

Signs of infection:

- Increased swelling
- Odour
- Redness
- Increased pain
- Heat
- Exudate

What to do if the wound bleeds:

- Apply continuous pressure for 10 minutes. Repeat if necessary.
- If excessive, please seek medical advice.

If the finger tips are exposed:

- Monitor for warmth and colour for the next 48hrs. If finger tips are cold or discoloured please contact us.

Smoking and Alcohol

It is advised to avoid smoking or smoky atmospheres. This is because tobacco and nicotine affect the circulation of blood to your hand, meaning a delay in healing and increase in pain.

It is also advised to avoid consuming alcohol for 24 hours after anaesthetic.

Driving

Please avoid driving until you have been told it is safe to do so.

You need to be able to hold the steering wheel safely with both hands.

(Some insurance policies may not cover you if you were to have an accident; always check with your provider)

Future management

- In three weeks, or when the wound has completely healed, massage the scar with light unperfumed cream. This will aid in healing and may improve the final appearance.
- Care must be taken with new scars in the sun. Apply a high factor sun block to the scar for at least a year.

Please do read this information leaflet as it may answer any questions you may have.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us (please refer to the useful numbers on the reverse).

If you have any urgent concerns, please call 111, visit your GP, or local Minor Injuries Centre.

Plastic Surgery

Post operative information

Plastic Trauma Clinic

Contact Details:

Should you have any concerns or questions regarding your treatment please contact:

Plastic Trauma Clinic

Tel:01342414078

Monday to Friday 08:00-18:00

Plastic Dressing Clinic

Tel:01342414442

Monday to Friday 09:00-16:30

Hand Therapy Department

Tel:01342414072

Monday to Friday 09:00-16:30

For urgent enquires out of hours, please contact the switchboard and ask for the plastic surgeon on call.

Switchboard

Tel:01342414000

Please ask if you would like this leaflet in larger print or a different format.

Plastic Trauma Clinic
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Patient details (label)

Consultant's name:

Follow up care at :

GP surgery, Practice nurse in _____ Days

Or

Main Outpatients, Dressing clinic

On: _____

At: _____