

General Guidelines

- **Do not** drive or return to work until you are safe to do so check with your G.P if unsure.
- you may start to use your hand for light activities 48 hours after your operation providing these activities are comfortable

Dressings

On the day after your operation, please remove the outer dressings until you come to a small dressing at the level of the wrist. Please leave this dressing alone and do not allow it to get wet.

If you feel your dressing needs changing before your stitches are removed, please contact your physiotherapist or GP's surgery.

Stitches

If your stitches need to be removed, you should make an appointment with your GP for 10-14 days after your surgery. You will be advised on the day.

Follow-Up Care

An appointment will be made for you if needed in the Physiotherapy Department.

If you have any questions or require further information or advice, please contact one of the following:

Day Surgery Unit

Mon - Fri (between 8 am and 7 pm)

01935 384339

Physiotherapy Department

Mon - Fri (between 8:30 am and 5 pm)

01935 384358

Orthopaedic Clinic

Mon - Fri (between 9 am and 5 pm)

01935 384319

**If you need this leaflet in another format, e.g., large print please telephone
01935 384256**

Carpal Tunnel Release

Hand Therapy Service

Please read this sheet carefully and if there is anything you do not understand or if you require further information, speak to your nurse or physiotherapist.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome occurs as a result of the median nerve being compressed as it passes through the wrist. This results in pain and, at times, a feeling of pins and needles and/or numbness and a loss of strength in the hand. Surgery releases the compression on the nerve and therefore eases the symptoms.

On Admission

You will be visited by the doctor, who will discuss the operation and give you an opportunity to ask any questions.

The site of the operation will be marked and your written consent for the operation obtained. All jewellery on the affected side should be removed.

After the operation

Discomfort

You will be offered mild pain relief medication to take for the first 2 to 4 days to deal with any discomfort you may have. Severe, continuous pain should be reported to your doctor.

Swelling

To aid the removal of swelling in your hand, it is essential that you follow the instructions below:

1. You will be supplied with a sling or collar and cuff to keep your hand above your heart when standing and walking. Use this for the first 48 hours after surgery
2. Remove your sling hourly so you can do the exercises described in the next section
3. When sitting or lying, support your arm and hand on pillows at heart height
4. If you experience excessive swelling of the hand and fingers, it may indicate that the bandage is too tight particularly if, in addition, the fingers are very painful, numb, cold or blue. If these symptoms are not improved by exercising the fingers as described in the next section, contact the Casualty Department of your local hospital or your own doctor

Exercises

It is extremely important that you practice the following exercises for approximately 5 minutes every hour during the day in order for your hand to heal with maximum movement following the operation. Slow, controlled exercises are more effective and more comfortable than quick movements. The exercises should be started as soon after the operation as possible.

1. stretch your arm above your head
2. bend and straighten your elbow
3. bend your wrist backwards and forwards
4. stretch your fingers and thumb apart as far as possible
5. bend your fingers to touch the palm of your hand as if to make a fist
6. try to touch the tip of each finger with your thumb