



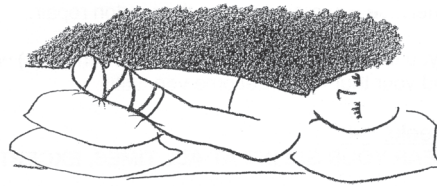
## **Advice after hand surgery** (pages 1 of 2)

This information leaflet has been written to help you following your injury or surgery.

### **Keep your hand up!**

After any surgery or injury to your hand, swelling will occur. You should keep your hand higher than your heart during the day.

At night keep it resting on pillows by your side.



If you do not keep your hand up:

- It may become very swollen
- It may be uncomfortable
- It may slow down the healing
- It may limit the movement in your hand.

These factors could slow down your recovery.

- After an injury it is NOT normally recommended that you are given a sling, as it may cause neck and shoulder problems. However, whilst you are in hospital you may be issued with a purple foam sling to aid elevation. This is called a Bradford sling. This can be taken home to provide protection and to aid elevation, but should NOT be used around your neck.
- It is important to keep your hand up, until you are told it is no longer necessary.
- It is important to maintain the movement in your shoulder and elbow following an injury or operation to your hand, as they may become very stiff. Every hour during the day, exercise your arm by reaching up towards the ceiling 10 times.

## **What to do if you have pain?**

When you leave hospital you will have painkillers to take. We advise you to take these regularly as prescribed, which will help to keep you comfortable.

## **Please leave dressings alone!**

It is important you DO NOT remove your dressings. These will be changed at your first appointment in the Plastics Outpatient Department, or occasionally it will be organised for you to attend your GP practice.

If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: [customer-care@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:customer-care@salisbury.nhs.uk)

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: [www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily](http://www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily) or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: [patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk) if you would like a reference list.

If you have been given a splint made out of Plaster or Thermoplastic (a plastic which is heated and moulded to you) then DO NOT remove it. It is there to support your hand and prevent you moving it.

### Contact us:

- If you have smelly discharge/ooze or persistent bleeding coming from your wound
- If your cast/splint/bandage feels too tight causing your fingers to appear dusky (grey/blue) or cool
- If your cast/splint/bandage becomes loose and unsupportive
- If you are experiencing increased pain or discomfort.

If you have any other concerns then do not hesitate to contact us on one of the numbers below.

### Points to remember

- Keep your hand well elevated at all times
- Do not drive until you have been advised to by a health professional
- Do not return to work – until you are advised to do so. This depends on your occupation
- Do not use your injured hand for anything!
- Do not remove or alter your dressing/splint/cast
- Avoid getting your dressing/splint/cast wet
- Do your exercises hourly or as prescribed by your therapist.

### Outpatient follow-up

You will be given an appointment for the Plastics Outpatient Department by your nurse on the ward, before you leave hospital.

The Plastic Outpatient Department is on Level 3, where you will be seen by a nurse, have a dressing change and possibly be seen by a doctor or therapist, as required.

If you have any concerns or questions on the above or about your surgery, please do not hesitate to contact the Plastics Outpatient Department Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm or the Plastic and Burns ward at all other times.

### Contact details

Hospital telephone number: 01722 336262

Plastics Outpatient Department: ext 3254 – Monday - Friday 9am- 5pm

Plastic and Burns Ward: 01722 345507 – Can be called at any time of the day or night

Day Surgery Unit - ext 4550 - Monday to Friday 7.30am - 7pm.