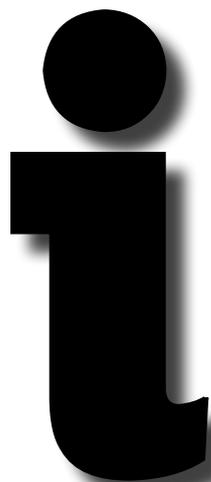


Living one-handed (page 1 of 3)



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

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 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 if you would like a reference list.

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An information leaflet for people who have use in only one hand, for example after elbow or wrist surgery, fractures or sprains.

Personal activities of daily living

Medication

Ask your chemist for easy to open containers, i.e. not child-proof.

Alternatively, ask your chemist or carer to put your tablets in a weekly pill dispenser.

Bed transfers

To get out of bed safely, with one hand or arm:

- roll onto the side of your good arm. Allow your legs to drop off the side of the bed towards the floor, and at the same time push up with your good arm until you are sitting up on the side of the bed.



If you are uncertain about this, ask to speak to your Occupational Therapist who will demonstrate it, and practise the technique with you.

Washing and dressing

Ask your Occupational Therapist for advice on small aids which may help you. These include sponges with long handles and dressing sticks.

Wearing loose clothes and those with velcro or zips are easier than wearing tighter clothes or those with buttons. The basic rule is to dress the weaker/non functional side first, and undress it last.

Women may find that a front-opening bra is easier to put on and take off.

Try using a hairbrush to spread shampoo when washing your hair.

Lace-up shoes? Get elastic laces (from Timpson's or other shoe menders), replace your shoe laces and tie the elastic laces. You can then put on the shoes with the help of a shoehorn.

If you have a plaster cast, this will need covering whilst you wash to avoid getting it wet, e.g. with a Limbo waterproof cast protector (tel 01243 573417 or you can order on-line from www.limboproducts.co.uk)

Department: _____

Extension: _____

Eating

Place your plate on a non-slip mat, and use a plate guard to prevent food being pushed off the plate. These are both available in local shops and can be ordered on-line. Alternatively, use plates or bowls with a lip at the edge.

Toileting

Tear off toilet paper before you sit down.

To avoid pulling up clothes, women may find dresses or skirts easier to use. Trousers are easier if they are elasticated at the waist.

Domestic activities of daily living

Ask your Occupational Therapist for specific advice; your Occupational Therapist may need to assess you in a kitchen environment.

Microwaves

It is easier and quicker to use a microwave one handed than a conventional cooker. Vegetables, do not usually need draining, and containers are often less hot than dishes from an ordinary oven.

If you have to use a conventional oven, be aware that smaller, lighter dishes are easier and safer to manage with one hand.

Kettle

It is difficult to unplug and plug in a kettle lead, therefore it is useful to keep the kettle plugged in, and switch on/off at socket on wall if you are worried.

Lift off the kettle lid, and fill the kettle with a lightweight plastic jug. Replace the lid.

Ensure your kettle faces in the best direction for you to pour safely.

Cordless or small travel kettles are easier to use.

Opening jars and bottles

Your Occupational Therapist may have recommended a jar opener suitable for one handed opening. Many varieties are available in local shops, but you may want to try them first.

If you have a small amount of grip in your 'affected' hand, place the jar in this hand and use the other hand to open the lid. A piece of non-slip matting held over the jar or a damp tea towel may help.

If you can sit down, place the jar between your thighs, and use your good hand to open it.

Chopping and peeling

There are some commercially available boards with spikes to stabilise vegetables, these are NOT suitable for people with sensation loss. Check with your Occupational Therapist.

You may find it easier to use frozen vegetables or packets of ready prepared vegetables or salad.

Cheese, breadcrumbs, onions (fresh and frozen) and even whipped cream can be bought ready prepared.

Any food that you want to cut can be placed on a piece of non-slip matting to prevent movement when chopping.

Tins

Most commercially available electric tin openers are not very easy to use one-handed. Your Occupational Therapist may recommend a wall mounted one-handed opener. Otherwise you may have to ask someone else to open this and place the food in a clean margarine container or similar easily opened container.

Saucepans

Saucepans are difficult to lift and drain. You can use a draining spoon to lift out vegetables, or alternatively you could place a colander in a clean, empty sink, and pour the contents of the saucepan into it. Your Occupational Therapist may otherwise advise that you buy a vegetable basket. This is like a chip basket and remains in the saucepan whilst the food cooks. It can then be lifted directly out of the pan and onto the plate. Lakeland sell a silicone version www.lakeland.co.uk or 3/4 Market Walk, Salisbury.

Non-slip matting

This is useful for stopping bowls, plates etc from slipping around. Your Occupational Therapist may be able to order you some or you could buy some at a Disabled Equipment shop or from a catalogue. It is often known by its brand name 'DYCEM'.

You can order it on line from: www.dycem-ns.com

Carrying food

You may find it difficult to move a plate of food one-handed from the kitchen to another room.

Your Occupational Therapist may recommend a special trolley or wheelchair tray - you will need to be assessed for these.

Lighting gas ovens and hobs

It is NOT safe to attempt to use matches one-handed. You can buy gas igniters from cookware shops or gas showrooms.

Buttering bread/toast

You can purchase a buttering board which stops bread moving, or a non-slip mat may be used.

Suppliers of equipment

Look in "Yellow Pages" under Disabled Equipment for shops that sell the items mentioned in this leaflet. Some chemists also stock items.

Top tips for other patients?

If, having read this booklet and lived 'one handed' you have other tips that would help other patients, please email patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk