



## **Discharge Information**

## **Upper Limb Surgery**

## **Quick Reference Sheet**

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### Upper Limb Surgery Quick Reference Sheet

#### Activity /Exercises

Exercises will be explained by your physiotherapist prior to going home. It is important to follow these instructions carefully.

**Driving is not permitted while your arm is a sling or plaster.** Do not drive until after your post operative visit. When you come for your post operative appointment we will let you know when you can commence driving.

**Returning to work** will depend on the type of work you do i.e. manual or office. Generally a sick certificate will be issued up until the date of your post operative appointment. (approx 2 weeks) when further assessment can be made.

While rest is imperative there is always a risk of developing **Deep Vein Thrombosis** after surgery It is suggested you gently mobilize at home (walking) as soon as possible after your surgery.

#### The Operative Site

Your wound may be covered with a dressing which will remain on until your post operative appointment. **It is normal for some blood or fluid to ooze from the wound but if excessive fluid or blood oozes from under the dressing you should call 83769988 for further advice.** If you have small plastic dressings in place leave these insitu until 5 days post operative when they can be replaced once you have showered. **Before handling your wound or replacing the dressing you must remember to wash your hands thoroughly.**

Stitches will be removed at your post operative appointment.

**If you have been fitted with a sling this must remain on until your post operative appointment.**

#### Hygiene/Showering

It is important when showering that you support your arm - rest it on the soap dish. The arm should not be allowed to hang down. It is also important you dry under your arm well.

The wound and dressing must be kept dry until 5 days after surgery. After the 5<sup>th</sup> day you can shower but not have a bath. It is important the plastic dressing be pat dried and if required the small plastic dressings can be replaced with bandaids. It is important to keep any larger dressings dry by covering with a plastic bag prior to showering. These will be removed at your appointment. If you wear rings on the hand of the operated limb it is important you do not replace these until you have been seen at your post operative appointment as the hand may still swell some time after surgery.

#### Pain Management

Pain relief (or a script) will be provided to you on discharge. This amount should be adequate but if you run out you will need to obtain a script from your GP. However you may be required to take occasional "over the counter"

medication for the next few weeks. It is not unusual to experience some pain for several weeks after surgery. If you have difficulty managing the pain please contact the surgery for further advice. It is a good idea to take analgesia ½ hour prior to commencing exercises.

Following surgery you should resume any regular medication you were on prior to surgery.

#### Complications/Problems

**Swelling, redness, increased warmth of the operated area , if excessive discharge from the wound commences or continues or if you have a temperature or feel generally unwell please contact me on 83769988 ASAP or 83782179 after hours.**

Any numbness or tingling that persists in the hand of your operated limb, even after wrist and hand exercises should be reported to me.