

Tennis / Golfer's Elbow Release

Information for patients

The Nottingham Shoulder and Elbow Unit



This document can be provided in different languages and formats. For more information please contact:

Physiotherapy Department
Nottingham City Hospital Campus
Hucknall Road, Nottingham, NG5 1PB
Tel: 0115 9691169 exr. 54632 (Mon-Fri 8am-5pm)

This booklet contains information about the surgery that you have been advised to have and aims to answer some of the questions you may have about the operation and your stay in hospital.

About surgery at City Hospital

There are three orthopaedic wards at City Hospital: surgical Theatre Admission Lounge, Harvey 1 and Edward 2. You will be admitted to one of these wards during your stay in hospital. On each ward a named nurse will be allocated to you to co-ordinate your nursing care. A physiotherapist will supervise your rehabilitation. The physio may see you before, rather than after your surgery.

You will usually be admitted to the hospital on the day of your operation, and you will usually go home the same day. Occasionally you may be required to stay overnight. If you think you will need transport to get home or help when you get home please tell your named nurse when you first come in.

What to bring

You need to bring in with you any medicines that you are taking, toiletries, towel, nightwear and some loose and comfortable clothing. Please leave valuables at home.

Operation day

Your anaesthetist will see you on the morning of the operation to discuss your anaesthetic with you. You will be able to eat and drink as usual the day before your operation. You may be able to have an early morning drink even on the day of your operation. The time you have to stop eating will depend upon the time of your operation.

You must not smoke after midnight the day before the operation.

Tennis Elbow / Golfer's Elbow – what is it?

Tennis and Golfer's Elbow are overuse conditions affecting the muscles and tendons of the forearm and elbow. Tennis Elbow affects the tendons on outside of your elbow (lateral epicondylitis) and Golfer's Elbow affects the tendons on the inside of your elbow (medial epicondylitis).

The tendons at your elbow attach to the muscles in your forearms, and can become chronically irritated and worn with overuse. This can lead to you experiencing pain with activities such as lifting heavy objects, or extending (tennis elbow) or flexing (golfer's elbow) your wrist

What causes it?

Repetitive activities can put too much strain on the tendons, which causes collagen to become fragile and loose strength, increasing the risk of injury. Injury causes scar tissue to be laid down, which thickens and forms attachments to surrounding layers of soft tissue. This inhibits the surrounding tissue's normal movement, causing friction, which in turn, leads to further inflammation and irritation.

Surgical Treatment

A small incision at the elbow allows the surgeon to identify the affected tendons and any other problems. The tendon is released from the bone of your elbow and any affected tissues are removed. Any bony spurs found are removed. Some surgeons then stitch the loose end of the released tendons to the nearby tissue.

After the operation

You will have a soft bandage around your elbow. Usually the wound is closed with steri-strips, however, if you have skin clips or stitches, these will be removed by your GP surgery in 10 days at the time of your wound check.

How can I sleep?

Sleeping on your operated elbow may be uncomfortable. We recommend sleeping on your back, or opposite side, with pillows supporting your operated arm. Feather pillows are easier to use than foam ones.



One pillow slightly folded under your neck gives enough support for most people.

A pillow folded in half supports your arm in front.



A pillow tucked along your back helps to prevent you rolling onto your operated arm in the night.

If sleeping on your back, tie a pillow tightly in the middle (a "butterfly pillow"), or use the folded pillow shown before and place it under operated elbow.

When can I go home?

Once the nursing staff are happy you are fit to go home and you feel well enough.

Rehabilitation

Gentle early range of movement of the fingers, wrist, and elbow are allowed from day 1 of the surgery. We would advise avoiding any heavy lifting / loading activities, and avoid leaning on the elbow for the first 6-8 weeks.

This operation does not routinely need outpatient physiotherapy follow up.

You will be seen in the specialist orthopaedic clinic around 6 and 12 weeks after your operation this may be with one of the specialist orthopaedic physiotherapists.

When can I expect to return to normal activities?

This depends on your symptoms. Light functional use of the arm can start on day 1, most people are comfortable between 6 to 12 weeks after surgery. As you recover from the procedure and any swelling settles down it is normal to have some pain. This should be manageable with medication. We advise avoiding any heavy lifting, or gripping with the operated arm for the first three months to allow the affected tendons to heal.

Driving can resume when you are comfortable and safe to control a car. It is wise to discuss this with your insurance company.

Nottingham Shoulder and Elbow Unit Therapy website

<https://www.nuh.nhs.uk/shoulder-and-elbow-physiotherapy-unit>

Useful contact numbers

City Hospital Campus (0115) 969 1169

Dial the City Hospital campus number above, listen to the recorded message and then dial the appropriate extension from the list below.

	Available	Extension
Clinic reception (To alter a clinic appointment)	Mon– Fri 9am-5pm	55306
Shoulder and Elbow secretaries: Genevieve Stewart-Smith Amy Martin	Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm	55047 56899
Occupational Therapy	Mon – Fri 8am – 4pm	55330
Physiotherapy Shoulder and Elbow Team		54580
Therapy Reception (To alter a therapy appointment)		55310 55330 56119
Wards	24 hours if urgent	
Edward 2 Ward		55879
Harvey 1 Ward		55904/6
Theatre Admission Lounge		51441

Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback. If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of care or treatment please speak to a member of staff or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):

Freephone (QMC Campus): 0800 183 0204

From a mobile or abroad: 0115 924 9924 ext 65412 or 62301

E-mail: pals@nuh.nhs.uk

Letter: NUH NHS Trust, c/o PALS, Freepost NEA 14614, Nottingham NG7 1BR

www.nuh.nhs.uk

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.