



Day Procedure Unit

Tennis Elbow

This leaflet gives information for patients and their families who are undergoing a Tennis Elbow operation. It is intended to be used as a guideline only. Please check with your surgeon for more specific information.

Pre-operative preparation

You will be asked to attend the pre-admission assessment clinic 1-6 weeks prior to admission to ensure you are fit for surgery. You will be seen in the pre-admission clinic by the nurse for any necessary pre-operative tests, which may include; blood tests, cardiogram (ECG). If you are unlikely to require any pre-operative tests your assessment may be carried out by telephone. You will be admitted on the day of surgery unless there are any medical reasons which may require you to be admitted the day before the operation.

What is tennis elbow?

Tennis elbow is the common name given to a painful condition which affects the outside part of your elbow bone. It can also be called lateral epicondylitis. Tennis elbow develops when the tendon that joins the muscles of your forearm to your upper arm bone becomes degenerative and tears or becomes inflamed.

The operation

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic. It may also be performed under a regional anaesthetic – where only your affected limb is anaesthetised by an injection of local anaesthetic either into your armpit or neck.

An incision is made over the side of your elbow. This allows the affected tendon to be assessed and released. The incision will be closed with sutures. Please remove all rings and jewellery from the arm you are having your operation on. Although most patients will go home on the day of the procedure, occasionally some patients may require an overnight stay. All patients are required to bring an overnight bag.

After the operation

You may feel some pain/discomfort after the operation. It is advised to take simple painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen which should be suitable to relieve this discomfort. Please bring these tablets with you on the day of the operation.

Keep your affected arm elevated in the sling or on a pillow for 24-48 hours. Avoid lifting any heavy objects. Gentle hand, finger, elbow and shoulder exercises will help prevent stiffness and swelling. You will need to keep your dressing dry until it is removed.

Most people are able to return to driving after one week however you should discuss this with your surgeon. Please also check with your insurance company, as policies can vary.

Most people are able to return to light work 2 weeks after the operation but it does depend on the type of work that you do. You should discuss with your surgeon when you are able to return to work.

What are the risk and complications?

The possible risks and complications for Tennis elbow include;

- Wound Infection –If you experience any increase in pain, redness, swelling, or develop a temperature – please see your GP as this maybe a sign of infection.
- Swelling – May persist for up to three months. Keeping your operated arm elevated will help to relieve this.
- Function – The symptoms and your general function will recover slowly. It maybe up to six months before you see a final result.
- Pain – This is a painful operation and can take up to 6 weeks for any improvement.
- Failure – some patients will not see a complete cure after surgical release

Follow – up

You will normally be seen in the outpatient clinic after the operation. Your stitches may be removed at your local GP surgery. Your dressing needs to stay in place until this time.

Useful contacts for further information

If you have any queries prior to the procedure, please contact the Day Procedure Unit on **01603 286008**.

For help giving up Smoking: contact Smokefree Norfolk local freephone 0800 0854 113 or www.smokefreenorfolk.nhs.uk or email smokefreenorfolk@nchc.nhs.uk

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