

Trauma Admissions

Why do you need surgery?

Following discussion with the Orthopaedic Consultant it has been decided that you would benefit from having an operation to improve the function of your joint and assist the healing of your injury. If you are in agreement with this plan you will be placed on the trauma list whilst waiting for your operation, either at home or in hospital. The Doctor or Trauma Nurse Practitioner will complete an admission pack with you and undertake (with your consent) any pre-operative tests that you might need (e.g. heart tracings, blood tests, x-rays or scans).

The aim of this leaflet is to explain how the system works, who to contact if there is a problem, and some general advice.

The trauma list

This is a list dedicated to patients who need operations to treat broken bones, infected wounds or damaged tendons. It runs from 08:30-17:30, Monday to Sunday with extended operating until 21:00 on two variable days a week.

Trauma list planning

At 0800 daily the Orthopaedic Consultant, theatre staff and nurses meet to discuss every patient waiting on the trauma list for an operation. During this meeting, your x-rays are reviewed and discussed and occasionally the decision to treat your injury without surgery is made. If this happens you will be contacted and the reasons explained. At the end of this meeting, the day's operating list will be planned. When planning the list, the severity of injury, degree of joint swelling and length of time since initial injury are all taken into account. Delays in your admission may result from the number of patients already waiting on the list, or emergency

patients admitted during that day who require immediate surgery; occasionally this could result in your surgery being postponed even on the day you have been admitted. We try and keep everyone updated as soon as possible about any changes to their planned surgical time. If changes happen we apologise for any inconvenience that this may cause. Please be patient with staff, we understand your frustrations when your operation is delayed or cancelled, and we will always do our best to carry out your surgery as soon as we possibly can.

Why am I waiting at home for surgery and what should I be doing?

There are a variety of reasons that you may be waiting at home:

- 1) If you have broken your ankle, the joint often becomes too swollen preventing surgery until the swelling has reduced. **To prevent this occurring whilst sitting/resting please ensure your ankle is above your waist level by resting it on pillows. Please try to avoid the amount of time you have your leg down whilst walking.** It can take up to 14 days for this swelling to reduce. An appointment will be booked in fracture clinic between 09:30 and 10:00 for you to have this swelling checked. Please expect to wait for up to an hour with your leg elevated prior to this swelling check happening.
- 2) You may have damaged the skin or have a skin condition that needs treating before surgery can be performed. In these cases it is important to ensure the skin is healed to reduce potential risk of infections following surgery. You may therefore have to attend the hospital to have your skin/soft tissue checked before your operation.

- 3) You may be taking medications (blood thinning tablets) that need to be adjusted before you can safely have your operation.
- 4) Your injury may need to be treated by a particular specialist and your surgery may need to be planned for a day when your specialist surgeon is available.
- 5) We may need to order specialist equipment.
- 6) The trauma list may be very busy and we are unable to do your surgery immediately.

Whilst waiting at home it is important to take pain killers if you are in any discomfort. Elevation of your limb is extremely important to reduce the swelling caused by the damage, this swelling often leads to more pain which may reduce if you elevate your affected limb.

You may be asked to come to fracture clinic for a review of your condition before we finalise an operation (for instance to check limb swelling). In other circumstances this may be unnecessary and we can offer you an operation as soon as availability allows.

Admission day

It is important for you to follow these instructions, if you do not it could result in your surgery being delayed:

- YOU NEED TO PHONE DURBIN WARD ON **01392 403691** AT 08:45 to see if your operation is planned for the day. If your surgery is planned for the morning **PLEASE DO NOT EAT ANYTHING FROM MIDNIGHT ON THE DAY** of surgery. YOU CAN DRINK CLEAR FLUID – water, black tea or black coffee (no milk products) UNTIL 06:30 on the day of your surgery.
- If your surgery is planned for the afternoon. PLEASE HAVE A LIGHT BREAKFAST AT 06:30 **THEN DO NOT EAT ANY MORE FOOD ON THE DAY** of surgery. YOU CAN DRINK CLEAR FLUID – water, black tea or black coffee (no milk products) UNTIL 10:30 on the day of your surgery.
- Please do not have chewing gum, cough sweets, peppermints, fizzy drinks, flavoured teas and waters, boiled sweets or milk products for 6 hours prior to your surgery.

- **YOU MUST NOT TAKE ANY DIABETIC OR BLOOD THINNING MEDICATION.** If you usually take this please contact the ward/ fracture clinic to let the nursing staff know.
- **YOU MUST TAKE ALL YOUR OTHER REGULAR MEDICATIONS AND ANALGESIA** if required at this time.
- If we can perform you operation, you will be asked to come to Durbin Ward or the Orthopaedic Admissions Unit (OADM) as soon as possible. If we cannot perform your surgery on that day we will advise you to eat and drink as normal, and (in most cases) ask you to phone in the next day having followed the same nil by mouth routine.

Women of child bearing age should be assessed regarding pregnancy status before surgery. Our nursing staff will sensitively ask all women, regardless of their personal circumstances, to undertake a urine pregnancy test on the ward on the day of surgery.

We would like to thank you for your understanding and co-operation whilst waiting for your surgery and we will always answer any concerns that you may have about your injury or your operation. If you have any questions please phone **Durbin ward** on **01392 403691**, ask the receptionist to contact the trauma nurse practitioner who will phone you back as soon as possible.

General information

On the day of your operation please ensure you have arranged for someone to bring you into hospital (we are unable to provide transport).

Please bring an overnight bag, something to read and all medications that you are currently taking. If you are unsure about whether you should take any of your routine medications we will advise you when you arrive on the ward.

Please do not leave the ward without telling a member of staff as there will be a number of people who need to see you before your operation, these include orthopaedic consultants, anaesthetists, physiotherapists and nursing staff.

Please let a member of staff know if you are in any pain so that we can try to make you more comfortable.

Discharge information

If you are going home the same day as you have had surgery please arrange for someone to collect and stay with you for the first twenty four hours after your discharge.

Make sure that you have all your medications and personal belongings.

If you have any questions about your discharge please do not hesitate to discuss these with a member of staff who will be more than willing to help and reassure you.

Durbin Ward is located at:

PEOC Orthopaedic North, Level 1
Princess Elizabeth Orthopaedic Centre,
Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust,
Barrack Road
Exeter
EX2 5DW

Tel: **01392 403692**

Visiting hours: 10:30 to 20:00

If relatives or friends need to contact the ward we would be grateful if, whenever possible, this is after 11:30 as the ward is always extremely busy before this time.

The Orthopaedic Admissions Unit (OADM) is located at:

Princess Elizabeth Orthopaedic North, Level Two.
Princess Elizabeth Orthopaedic Centre,
Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust,
Barrack Road
Exeter
EX2 5DW

From the main entrance, walk up the stairs or take the lift up to level 2, turn right into the main corridor and walk as far as you can, turning right at end of the corridor for Orthopaedic Admissions.

From the PEOC Entrance and Reception on Level 0, walk upstairs (or take the lift) to level 2, turn left, then immediately right.

Tel: **01392 408402**

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

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