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NHS Grampian

Hand surgery: After you go home

Information for patients and carers

Orthopaedic Department
Woodend Hospital

After your operation

- It's important to keep your hand raised. Try to rest your hand on your opposite shoulder. Don't let your hand hang down by your side.
- When sitting or lying down, keep your hand raised on pillows or cushions. This will help to reduce any swelling that may occur in the first 48 hours after your surgery.
- Please avoid wearing rings on your affected hand until any swelling has completely gone.
- Please keep the dressing clean and dry. When washing, cover your hand with a plastic bag/cling film to keep it dry or it may be possible to use a rubber glove. **DO NOT** remove your dressing.
- **Do not drive** while you have any bandages on your hand. Also, please avoid any heavy lifting or carrying until your stitches have been removed.
- When the local anaesthetic wears off you may feel some discomfort. Simple painkillers (such as paracetamol) should be sufficient. Please **avoid** taking aspirin for pain.
- We'll send an email to your GP to advise them about your surgery. We'll advise you when you need to have your stitches removed.

When should I contact Woodend?

Contact the clinic if you have any of the following:

- You have increasing pain.
- You have a fever.
- The redness is spreading outwards from the wound.
- There is foul smell from the dressing.

Useful contact details:

Nurse-led orthopaedic clinic
Woodend Hospital
☎ 01224 556737
✉ gram.orthoelectiveoncall@nhs.scot

In an emergency, call NHS24 on 111.

Scar care advice

All scars, as they heal, can become red and raised. This advice helps minimise the effect of these normal events.

- A week after removal of your stitches, massage your scar with a bland moisturising cream such as E45® or Nivea®. Massage gently at first, then build up to a firm massage.
- Massage your scar twice a day. You may need to do this for several months until the scar begins to settle. The aim of the massage is to try to speed up the healing process.
- Scars can become red when exposed to the sun even in this country. Use total sunblock over your scar for at least the first year after surgery to prevent this. You may also want to cover the skin surrounding the scar so that any pale blotches are not so obvious.

This leaflet is also available in large print.

Other formats and languages can be supplied on request. Please call Quality Development on 01224 554149 for a copy. Ask for leaflet 1971.

Feedback from the public helped us to develop this leaflet. If you have any comments on how we can improve it, please call 01224 554149 to let us know.

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