

Shoulder arthroscopy



Information for patients attending
King's College Hospital only.

Confirming your identity

Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your **name** and **date of birth** and check your **ID band**. If you don't have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address.

If we don't ask these questions, then please ask us to check.

Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

What is an arthroscopy?

An arthroscopy is an operation in which a narrow telescope (called an arthroscope) is pushed into your shoulder. This allows the surgeon to access a clear image of the inside of the shoulder and assess the extent of any damage.

Why do I need this procedure?

- Find out what is causing the pain in your shoulder
- Restore function to the shoulder.

Consent

We must by law obtain your written consent to any operation and some other procedures before hand. Staff will explain the risks, benefits and alternatives before they ask you to sign a consent form. If you are unsure of any aspect of the treatment proposed, please do not hesitate to speak with a senior member of the staff again.

What happens before the operation?

Arranging the date for your operation: in the outpatient clinic the doctor will fill in an admission card and ask you to take it to the Day Surgery Centre. When you bring your admission card to the Day Surgery Centre you will be asked to fill out a health questionnaire.

Pre-assessment clinic - Before having your operation, you may be given a date to attend the pre-assessment clinic. At the time of your pre-assessment a nurse will take your medical history, explain the type of anaesthetic you will receive (usually a general anaesthetic), what to expect after the surgery and answer any questions you may have.

Please be prepared by having with you details of any medication you are currently taking, or bring them with you. You must also tell if you are allergic to any medicines, tablets or plasters.



Some screening tests will be carried out as required, such as checking your blood pressure, taking a blood sample or having an E.C.G. You will then be given a mutually convenient date for you to come in for your operation.

What happens during the operation?

Once the extent of damage has been determined further small incisions may be made to allow various specialist instruments to be inserted into the joint trim and repair the damaged areas. At the end of the operation the shoulder joint is washed out and the incision closed with sutures.



What happens after the operation?

If you have had a general anaesthetic you will be referred to the ward for at least an hour to allow you time to recover, as you will feel drowsy. People can vary in the time it takes them to recover, so please let your escort know so they can be flexible.

The dressing will be left in place until your follow-up appointment (unless otherwise instructed by your surgeon). More detailed information will be given to you in writing before you leave the department.

You will be able to leave the hospital on the same day, when the physiotherapist has cleared you. If required, the physiotherapist will arrange additional outpatient physiotherapy.

Pain relief will be given to you. The nurse will explain what they are and when you need to take them.

Your wounds need to be kept clean and dry. If your wound is closed with stitches they will be removed in 10-14 days.

Observe for signs of infection such as increasing pain under your wound and the surrounding area, hot areas around the wound, an unexplained temperature and unpleasant smell or discharge from the wound. If you experience any of these symptoms please consult your GP as you may require antibiotics or be referred back to the hospital.

Returning to normal activity

- Returning to work- if your job is of sedentary nature than you may return to work approximately two weeks after the procedure. If you have a physically demanding job you may need longer off work and will be advised of this on discharge from hospital
- Driving- you will be unable to drive for a period of time after your operation. This will be dependent upon what you have had done during your arthroscopy. The surgeon will advise you before you are discharged from hospital

Will I need to come back to the hospital?

If you are required to return to the outpatient clinic you will be informed of this prior to discharge and an appointment will be sent to you in the post.

What are the possible risks from an anaesthetic?

If you have a general anaesthetic: Immediately after a general anaesthetic you may feel tired, dizzy or weak. You must have someone to collect you and stay with you for the first 24 hours.



During the first 24 hours you should not:

- Drive or operate any motorized vehicle or electrical equipment
- Sign any legal documents or make important decisions
- Drink alcohol

During the first 7-10 days you may occasionally feel weak or dizzy. If this happens, sit down until the feeling passes. You may also feel a little depressed - we call this "post-operate blues". This should soon pass but if symptoms persist, please contact the Day Surgery Centre for help and advice.

What are the possible risks of surgery?

General complications of shoulder surgery:

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Infection
- Unsightly scarring.

Specific complications:

- Bleeding into the joint
- Infection in the joint
- Severe pain and stiffness
- Damage to nerves
- Blood clot in axillary vein near your armpit.

Valuables

Please do not bring in valuable, jewellery or large sums of money. If this is unavoidable, please ask a relative to take them home for you. The hospital cannot accept liability for the loss of personal items.



PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. The PALS office is located on the ground floor of the Hambleton Wing, near the main entrance on Bessemer Road - staff will be happy to direct you.

Tel: **020 3299 3601**

Email: **kch-tr.PALS@nhs.net**

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 020 3299 1844.

Urgent enquiries or emergencies

For urgent enquiries only please call **08448 222 888** and ask for pager number **813086**. Please leave a message with your name and a telephone and the on-call nurse will get back to you within the hour.

If you have had no reply after one hour, please contact your GP or nearest Accident and Emergency department.

Who can I contact with queries and concerns?

If you have any further problems following your operation please contact us:

Day Surgery Centre on **020 3299 3483** or **020 3299 2188** between 7.30am and 5.30pm (Monday to Friday). Ask to speak to the assessment nurse.

Corporate Comms: 0389

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