

Following an operation on your hand

How will my hand feel when I go home?

If you have had a local anaesthetic, your hand will be numb. Your fingertips may tingle as the anaesthetic wears off.

Do I need to take special care of my hand?

While your hand is numb, avoid any knocks or contact with heat, as you will not feel pain.

Can I use my hand as normal?

No. The use of your hand will be limited for the first 4 or 5 days, and you may need help.

Are there any exercises I should do?

Yes. It's important that you gently exercise your fingers quite often, about every hour.

Should I still use the sling?

Yes. Continue to use the sling during the day for 48 hours, but take it off at night.

Can I take any painkillers?

We will give you a supply of tablets when you go home if you need them, or you can take paracetamol. Follow the instructions carefully.

Will I need to change the dressings?

No. Unless we tell you otherwise, don't take off the dressings. Keep them clean and dry until we see you in the outpatients' clinic or at your GP surgery as advised by the nurse. We will look at the wound then, and take out the stitches.

Continued overleaf...

Will you see me again at the hospital?

Yes. Before you go home we will give you an appointment for the outpatients' clinic.

What shall I do if I have a problem?

If your hand is either:

- very swollen
- cold and blue
- numb or tingling
- bleeding a lot - remember, the bandages are likely to be blood stained

please contact your GP or come to the Accident and Emergency Department at your nearest hospital.

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690