

# What to expect after keyhole shoulder surgery

The aim of this leaflet is to provide an overview of keyhole shoulder surgery and to answer some of the common questions. It does not aim to substitute for a thorough discussion with your surgeon.

## In hospital

You will be seen by the physiotherapy team if you did not see them before the surgery. They will go through some of the exercises that you will be doing in the first couple of weeks from your surgery. They will also tell you what not to do, depending on the specific type of surgery you had.

## Hospital stay

Usually keyhole (arthroscopic) surgery is done as a daycase, or at most an overnight stay.

## Pain

You may have had a nerve block at the time of your surgery which means that your shoulder and sometimes your arm and hand may be numb. This usually wears off from a few hours after surgery to up to 24 hours depending on the specifics of the anaesthetic.

## Swelling

Your shoulder will be swollen as fluid is used during surgery to help the surgeon see what they are doing. This can leak out of the incision sites for the first 48 hours which is normal.

In the first 48 hours, using ice packs applied for 20-30 minutes at a time every hour or two, may be helpful, but make sure that you do not place ice directly on your skin, but instead use a T-shirt or thin towel.

## Sleeping

Some people find that lying down is more uncomfortable, in which case you may find it helpful to sleep in a reclining chair or to sleep propped up on pillows.

## First two weeks

You will usually be seen in the clinic 10 – 14 days after your surgery. This is to check the wounds and remove or trim any stitches. It is also to answer any questions you may have and to ensure you are in contact with the physiotherapy team.

## Physiotherapy exercises

You will be advised about the correct exercises for you but you may find the leaflet on “Initial exercises after shoulder surgery” useful.