

## What you should know prior to surgery

**Hygiene:** For 5 days prior to your surgery please shower daily, using an antibacterial soap e.g. Sapoderm or Gamophen (available from supermarkets or chemists), washing your body all over, paying particular attention to the area where surgery will be performed. This helps reduce the risk of post operative infection. Be aware that the surgery may be postponed if any pustules are present around the operation site. Showering on the day of surgery is of the utmost importance.

**Smoking:** If you are a smoker, we suggest you cease prior to your surgery or, at least attempt to reduce the amount you smoke, prior to your operation. Smoking has been proven to slow down the healing process and is definitely a risk when having a general anaesthetic.

**Medications:** Dr Nimon may advise you to stop taking certain medications prior to your surgery, i.e. anti inflammatories or Warfarin. Fish oil must be stopped one week before surgery as this can thin the blood. Regular medication i.e. HRT, blood pressure tablets may be taken as usual with a sip of water. If you have any queries regarding any other medications, including natural medications, please contact your anaesthetist.

**Driving:** It is recommended that you do not drive a motor vehicle following surgery until you have seen Dr Nimon at your post operative visit and he has given you clearance to do so. If you attempt to drive and are involved in an accident you may not be covered by your insurance company.

**Jewellery:** If you are having shoulder, hand, wrist, elbow, or finger surgery, all rings must be removed from the side you are being operated. This must be done prior to surgery and rings left off until you have regained normal hand function and swelling has reduced.

**Discharge from hospital:** You are required by hospital regulations to have an adult collect you from the hospital and stay with you for 24 hours following surgery. You will not be allowed to go home to an empty house without a carer.

**Reasons your surgery may be cancelled or postponed on the day:** If you are not correctly fasted for your anaesthetic, surgery will be postponed or delayed further down the operating list until you are correctly fasted. If pustules/pimples or scratches are present around the operative site, your surgery will be cancelled and re-scheduled to give the area time to heal.

**Pain Management:** On discharge from hospital you will be provided with pain relief or a prescription. However you may be required to take occasional "over the counter" medication for the next few weeks. It is not unusual to experience some pain for several weeks after surgery. If you have difficulty managing the pain, please contact the rooms for further advice. It is a good idea to take analgesia 30 minutes prior to commencing your post operative exercises. Pain usually improves on a daily basis and you should rest at home and slowly do more each day.

**However, if pain suddenly increases, the area swells or becomes red, fluid discharges, you feel unwell or have a temperature: IMMEDIATELY contact Dr Nimon at the rooms on 8376 9988 or on our after hours paging service 8378 2179.**

**Physiotherapy:** A physiotherapist will visit you prior to your discharge and you will be given home exercises to continue with, but usually no further physiotherapy will be required until you see Dr Nimon. A combined visit with a physio from PhysioOne may be booked at your post operative appointment at Glenelg rooms.

**Returning to work:** This will depend on the type of work you do i.e. manual or office. A sick certificate will be issued up until the date of your post operative appointment (approx. 2 weeks). Further assessment will be made by Dr Nimon at that time.

**Sling:** If you are required to wear a sling following surgery, it is important that it remains on 24 hours a day especially at night. For showering you may be given a collar'n'cuff to wear. It is important that whilst showering and dressing, you keep the arm as close to the body as possible. The sling may need to be worn for 6 weeks depending on your surgery.

**Giving your own blood (Autologous blood):** This is usually for joint replacements. You are ineligible after your 76<sup>th</sup> birthday. Please contact the Pathology Group on the referral form for criteria regarding donating blood. You will need to have someone available to drive you home after each collection. It is essential that you have a substantial meal and drink approximately 1-2 litres of fluid prior to each collection. First appointment will take 1 hour as you will need to be assessed by the department doctor. Take any relevant medical reports/records and medication list. Following appointments will take half an hour. Blood collection only takes 10 minutes. Autologous blood collection will be bulk billed and therefore you need to take your Medicare card, DVA card or Workcover details to each appointment.