

Chapel Allerton Hospital Orthopaedic Centre

Knee Arthroscopy

Information for patients



Knee arthroscopy is keyhole surgery, a camera is inserted into the knee through two or three puncture wounds it allows the surgeon to look at the joint surfaces, cartilage and the main ligaments of the knee.

The operation is usually carried out under a general anaesthetic as a day case procedure. As well as allowing the surgeon to see the problem some procedures can be formed as treatment.

You will need to attend Ward C3 admissions which is located on the first floor of Chapel Allerton Hospital.

You will be allowed home later the same day once you have recovered from the anaesthetic and started to mobilise.

We do have the facility to keep you overnight in hospital if clinically necessary.

Post - operative management.

The surgical wound will usually be covered by a simple dressing and then wrapped in a bulky bandage. This should be kept clean and dry for 48-hours. The bulky bandage should then be removed, and a waterproof dressing applied. These will be supplied to you when you are discharged.

7-10 days following surgery, you can remove all dressings covering your wound. If they are difficult to remove you can soak them off in the shower. You will only need to see your practice nurse if you have sutures which need removing. Our team will advise you.

A physiotherapist will see you on the day of surgery to provide you with crutches and discuss the exercises you will need to do at home.

Your knee is likely to feel sore and swollen for 2 - 6 weeks. This can last longer depending upon the extent of surgery performed.

For the first couple of days the leg should be rested and elevated as much as possible. A local anaesthetic may have been injected into the knee during surgery to relieve pain. Simple painkillers and cold packs may be used as required.

Return to activity.

A return to full activities generally takes between 2-6 weeks. This depends upon the type of treatment performed and the extent of damage in the knee.

You should be able to return to office type work within 2-5 days and physical work within 2-3 weeks.

You should be able to drive within a week. You should however be able to perform an emergency stop without discomfort or hesitation before starting to drive again.

Sport

You can start light training at three weeks and progress to full impact activities between 4-6 weeks depending upon the level of swelling and comfort.

All of these activities can be delayed if you have some arthritis in your knee. Rehabilitation rates vary from person to person.

Complications

Although uncommon complications can occur following your surgery, these include:

1. Excessive bleeding from wounds
2. Excessive swelling
3. Deep Vein Thrombosis (a clot in the lower leg veins)
4. Infection
5. Fluid leakage from the incision after seven days.

If you have any concerns after discharge home, with anything, particularly your wound, pain or swelling please feel free to contact ward C3 for advice, and assessment if needed.

Useful contact numbers

Pre-assessment	0113 392 4689
Ward C3 Post-operative Unit	0113 392 4503
Ward C3 Rehabilitation	0113 392 4203

Your x-rays may be used for teaching/research purposes. If you do not want this to happen, please let your surgeon know.

What did you think of your care?

Scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/nhsleedsfft

Your views matter

