

Healthier Communities,
Outstanding Care



Sherwood Forest Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

SLAP lesion repair operation

Information for patients

This booklet contains information about the shoulder surgery that you have been advised to have, and aims to answer some of the questions you may have about the operation and your stay in hospital.

About shoulder surgery at Sherwood Forest Hospitals

At our King's Mill Hospital site, there is an elective orthopaedic ward and an elective day case unit (DCU). At our Newark site, there is an elective day case unit/ward (Minster ward). The ward and site of your shoulder or elbow surgery will be discussed with you by your consultant team in the outpatient clinic before your operation.

You will be admitted to one of these wards during your stay in hospital. On each ward a "named nurse" will be allocated to you to co-ordinate your nursing care. You will also have named physiotherapists to supervise your rehabilitation.

You will usually be admitted to the hospital on the day of your operation, and you will usually go home the same day. If you think you will need transport to get home or help when you get home, please tell your named nurse when you first come in.

What to bring

You need to bring in with you any medicines that you are taking, toiletries, a towel, nightwear and some loose and comfortable clothing. Please leave valuables at home.

Operation day

Your anaesthetist will see you on the morning of the operation to discuss your anaesthetic with you. You will be able to eat and drink as usual the day before your operation. You may be able to have an early morning drink even on the day of your operation but you need to discuss this with the ward team before you have any drink.

You must not smoke after midnight the day before the operation.

SLAP lesion repair – what is the problem?

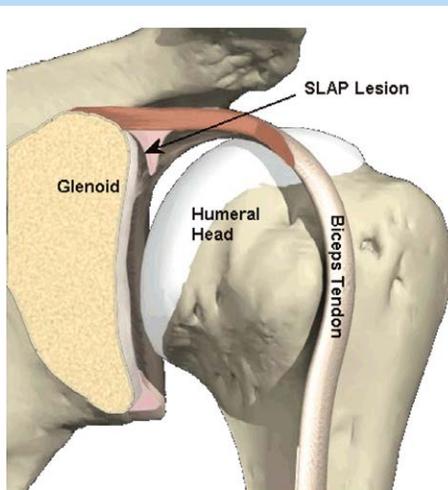
Your shoulder is the most mobile joint in your body and is therefore dependent on strong muscles to move and stabilise it. The most important muscles for this purpose are your rotator cuff muscles.

These muscles originate from your shoulder blade and their tendons form a hood covering the ball of your shoulder joint.

Your shoulder has a very shallow socket, which allows it to be very mobile. To compensate for this shallow socket, the shoulder joint has a cuff of cartilage called the labrum that forms a cup for the ball of your arm bone to move in. It is made of thick tissue and is susceptible to injury following trauma.

A SLAP lesion stands for Superior Labrum from Anterior to Posterior. It is a tear at the top of the shoulder socket where the biceps tendon attaches. It is seen most commonly in young people who play a lot of repetitive overhead sports or following a fall.

Symptoms include aching, 'catching' and pain when moving the shoulder.



SLAP lesion repair – what is it?

This is an operation to reattach the torn labrum back down to the shoulder socket. The surgeon re-attaches the labrum using small anchors and stitches.

How is it done?

The procedure is usually carried out as a keyhole procedure (arthroscopically) using a telescope about 5mm in diameter and instruments of similar size. This will give you 2-4 small scars of about 5-7mm in length on the back, the side and the front of your shoulder.

During your operation, we will also examine your shoulder joint.

Very occasionally there are technical reasons why we cannot carry out the procedure arthroscopically. This means it will be done cutting the skin at the front of your shoulder (open) to get to the shoulder tissues. That will leave a scar about 7cms in length along the front of your shoulder, along the bra/vest strap line.

You will probably have a little pain after your operation – slightly more if you have had the 'open' procedure. You will be given painkillers.

Arthroscopic



Open



When will the stitches come out?

If you have had stitches, they will be removed at your GP surgery, usually 10 days after your operation. An arthroscopic wound does not usually need stitches.

After your SLAP lesion repair

Your arm will be supported in a sling. This is to protect your shoulder capsule while it heals after the operation. You must not remove your sling for usually four weeks (you will be told exactly how long after your operation), except for washing and dressing. The nurses or physiotherapists will help you learn how to do this safely.



How do I fit my sling?

Please click the following link (or copy and paste into your browser) to view a video demonstration.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=VbUkWkcNlo4>



1. Support your arm on a pillow before you start. Slide your sling underneath the arm, so that your elbow is tucked into the corner of the sling, as shown.



2. Now using the non-operated arm feed the strap around your back and over the non-operated shoulder, as shown.



3. Now pull the strap up on itself and fix the velcro at a level where the arm feels comfortable and supported, as shown.

You will be taught how to manage your sling by the therapists or nurses. You will also be taught exercises to keep your elbow and hand moving when your drains have been removed.

What will happen after my operation?

When you have woken after the operation, you will be shown how to exercise your arm and manage your sling by one of the team.

How can I sleep?

Sleeping can be a little uncomfortable if you try to lie on your operated shoulder. We recommend that you lie on your opposite side. Ordinary pillows can be used to give yourself comfort and support (feather pillows are easier to use than foam ones). **Wear your sling whilst sleeping and do not remove at night time.**



If sleeping on your side, having a pillow or two under your head usually gives enough support for most people. A pillow tucked along your back helps to prevent you rolling onto your operated shoulder in the night. A pillow in front of your tummy is a nice place to rest your hand to help you sleep.



If sleeping on your back, use a pillow under the elbow of your operated arm as shown. Again, important in helping you get a good night's rest.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is important to get the most out of your shoulder after the operation. The first stage is to let your shoulder heal, by resting it in the sling. Meanwhile, you can move your wrist and hand to make sure that they do not get stiff or swollen. When you remove your sling for washing and dressing, you can also bend and straighten your elbow. **These are the only exercises you should do in the first 4 weeks whilst in your sling.**



Rest your upper arm on your thigh as shown in the picture opposite.

Using the non-operated arm, gently assist the operated arm up towards the shoulder as shown.

We are happy for you to work into some tightness and stiffness but we do not want you to have a lot of pain with the exercise.



Next, let the arm gently lower using the non-operated arm to gently guide it down.

We do not want you to push into a lot of pain.

The physiotherapist will guide you on how far to straighten the arm.

When can I go home?

- When you have recovered from your anaesthetic
- When your pain is controlled
- When you can manage your sling
- When you have seen the physiotherapy team.

Is that the end of my treatment?

Following your operation, you will be referred to physiotherapy for on-going rehabilitation. This will be timed for when your sling can come off (usually four weeks) or sooner if you are having difficulties with the sling or pain.

When you are allowed to remove the sling the physiotherapist will progress your exercises and advise you on how and when you should start to increase your arm use and return to activities of daily living.

After six weeks, you will have your clinic follow-up at either King's Mill or Newark Hospital. This will be with the advanced practice physiotherapist and/or nurse specialist. You will see them again at six months where they can organise a quick appointment with the surgeon if necessary.

What will I do as an outpatient?

You will continue with your exercises as given to you by the physiotherapist. You will gradually work on developing the strength and control of your shoulder, progressing to full functional movement. We will encourage you to learn how to use your shoulder comfortably.

When can I do my normal activities?

This depends upon your symptoms. Most people are comfortable by between six to 12 weeks after surgery.

Driving can be resumed when you are comfortable and safe to control a car. It is wise to discuss this with your insurance company. We would advise you not to drive for at least four weeks after the operation – as your arm may be in a sling.

The following table gives you the timescales for the amount of rest required to your arm before resuming a particular type of activity.

Guide:

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| • Light work (no lifting) | 6 weeks |
| • Medium (light lifting below shoulder level) | 6 weeks onwards |
| • Heavy (above shoulder level) | 3-6 months |

At eight to 10 weeks you can carefully return to light low risk activities, such as breaststroke swimming and jogging. At three months, you can return to training and freestyle swimming. At around six months you should be able to return to full scale contact sports provided you have regained strength and, most importantly, control and confidence. It is usually best to discuss this with your surgeon first.

If you are at all worried about your shoulder you should contact the hospital's shoulder and elbow team. The telephone numbers are below.

Useful contact numbers

King's Mill Hospital

Telephone: 01623 622515

Newark Hospital

Telephone: 01636 681681

Extension number

Mr Kurian's secretary	4117 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
Mr Bidwai's secretary	6148 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
Mr Mitra's secretary	6318 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
Nurse surgical care practitioner	4104 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
Advance practice physiotherapist	6148 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
King's Mill Day Case Unit	3048 (Monday to Friday, 24 hours)
King's Mill orthopaedic ward	2343 (Monday to Sunday, 24 hours)
Newark Hospital Day Case Unit (Minster ward)	5850 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
King's Mill physiotherapy department	3221 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
Newark Hospital physiotherapy department	5885 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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