

Distal Biceps Repair - Recovery Guide

Discharge

You will be discharged on the same day as surgery.

Sling

The sling is to be worn for 4 weeks unless advised otherwise.

You may come out of the sling when sitting comfortably in a chair, using a computer, eating, and performing exercises.

Bandage / Dressings / Sutures

You will be discharged from hospital with a dressing and bandage covering your elbow wound. The bandage can be removed the day after surgery. Leave the dressings in place until your 2-3 week review and we will remove it. The dressings are water resistant. Showering is fine but please keep your dressings relatively dry until your post op appointment.

Swelling / Icing

Post-operative swelling of the elbow and forearm is normal and should gradually decrease over the course of 1-2 weeks. Regular icing is effective for managing both pain and swelling. If the swelling worsens, or if you notice redness around the wound or experience a fever, please contact our office immediately or see your local doctor. For after-hours concerns, you can also reach out to the hospital emergency department.

Pain Relief / Medications

Your anaesthetist will have prescribed a range of painkillers for you to go home with. You should take them as prescribed. In general you should take paracetamol regularly, followed by anti-inflammatories if prescribed and then strong painkillers (such as Palexia / Tapentadol) for top-up pain relief. Cease these medications as soon as the pain allows.

Dr Robinson recommends taking Vitamin C 1000-1500 mg daily from 2 days prior to surgery until at least 3 weeks post the surgery.

Post-Operative Appointments

3 weeks: Your first post op clinic review. A nurse will remove your dressing and review your wound.

3 months: Review to see how you are progressing, if required.

Return to Work / Driving

A reasonable goal for returning to office work is within 2-3 weeks. For more physically demanding jobs, the target is typically 3-5 months on limited duties. Driving can usually be resumed around 6 weeks.

It is important to note that you will not be covered by your car insurance if you are involved in a motor vehicle accident before 6 weeks.

Return to Activities guide

Running: 6 weeks

Swimming: 4-6 weeks

Tennis: 4-6 months

Golf: 4-6 months

Gym based activities may commence at 4-6 months with modification.