After your regional anaesthetic (local anaesthetic block – ARM)

You should be careful trying to use your affected arm. **Always have someone with you the first time you try and stand up.** If the arm is numb - you may not be fully aware of the position of your arm, so you can be injured as a result.

During the time the block is working your arm or hand will feel very heavy and needs to be supported. You may need to use a sling. As the nerve block wears off you may get pins and needles in your arm/hand. This is completely normal.

It can vary how long it takes the numbness to wear off - but it should have worn off within 24–48 hours.

Advice for carers:

https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2020-05/12-SedationCarerweb.pdf

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/local-anaesthesia/

Things to look out for

You will need to seek help from the emergency medical services if:
- You have trouble breathing
- You are in severe pain that is not controlled by your tablets
- If the block has not fully worn off two days after the operation you should contact the anaesthetist/surgeon by calling the number given on your discharge paperwork

Take special care around heat sources, such as fires or radiators. You will not feel heat while your arm/hand is numb and you may burn yourself.

Avoid using any machinery or domestic appliances. Injury is more likely while you have no sensation in your arm.

Start taking your pain relief medicines before the block wears off, as instructed by the hospital. This is important as the pain can start quite suddenly.

Pain relief after surgery

You may be given a supply of painkillers. when you leave the hospital. It is sensible to buy some over-the-counter painkillers to have ready at home.

Speak to your GP if you are still using painkillers two weeks after leaving hospital.

If you feel very unwell or start having a fever, you can call your GP or get a friend or relative to take you back to the hospital or nearest Emergency department.

You can contact the general switchboard and ask for the ward where you were last looked after:

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham
Tel: **0121 371 2000**

Heartlands Hospital, Good Hope Hospital, and Solihull Hospital
Tel: **0121 424 2000**

You can call **111** for urgent medical assistance. For emergencies call **999**. Explain your symptoms and give details about your recent operation.

For patient feedback on your anaesthetic care please contact **0121 371 4400** or email **complaints@uhb.nhs.uk.**

More information

www.rcoa.ac.uk/patient-information

Anaesthetic
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