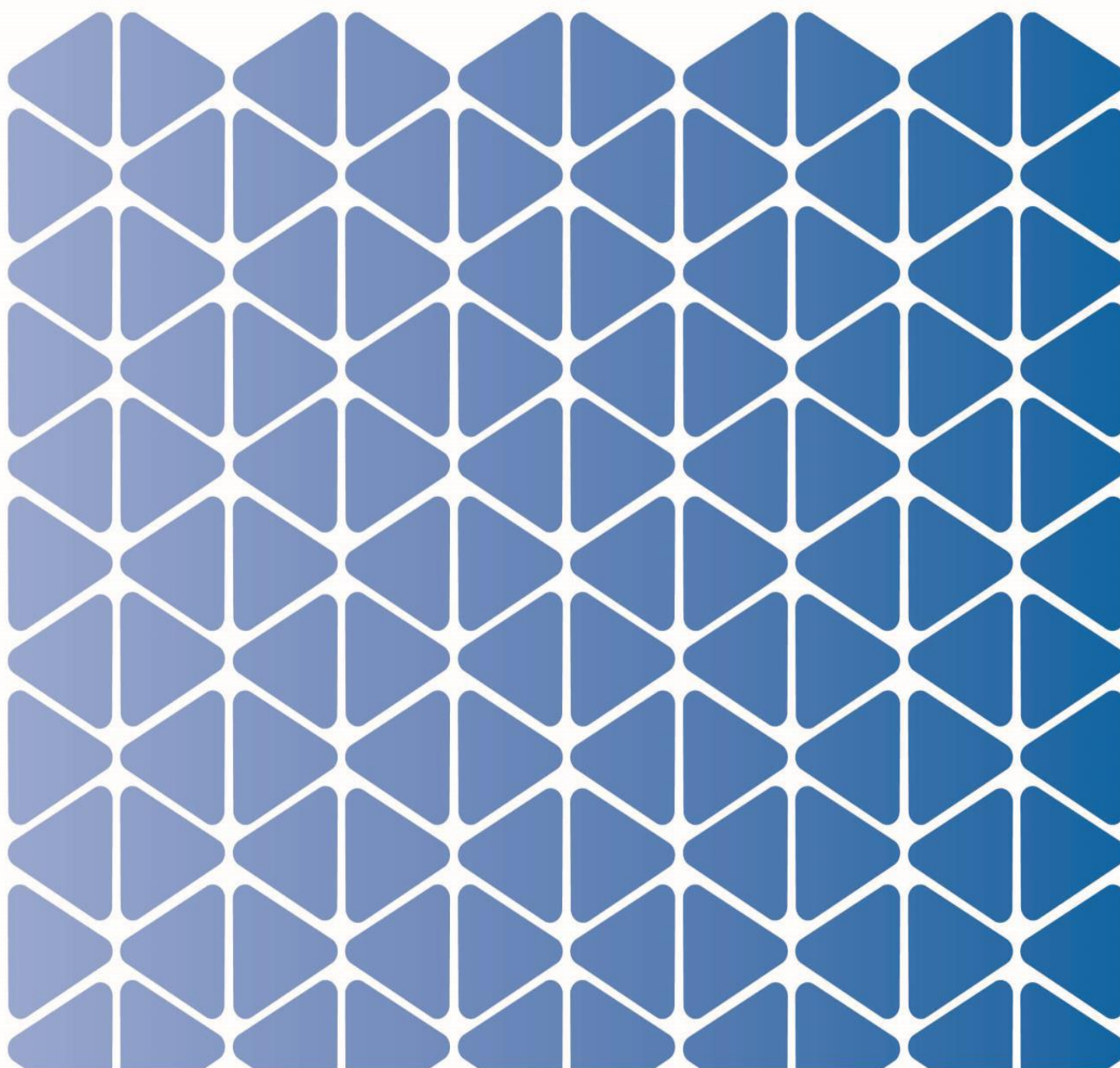


PATIENT INFORMATION**HAND SURGERY
– Information for Patients**

Hand Surgery – Information for Patients

You are scheduled to have hand or wrist surgery at Kidderminster Treatment Centre. This leaflet contains important information about the day of your operation.

Anaesthesia for Your Operation

Most hand and wrist procedures are performed using a regional anaesthetic (brachial plexus block).

This means:

- Your arm will be numb and pain-free
- You can stay awake during surgery
- You can recover and go home more quickly

Your anaesthetist will discuss this with you on the day.

Please scan the QR code provided for a short video explaining anaesthesia for hand surgery.

[Awake Hand Surgery Video](#)



What is a Brachial Plexus Block?

The brachial plexus is a group of nerves running from your neck to your arm.

A brachial plexus block involves injecting local anaesthetic around these nerves to:

- Stop pain signals
- Make your arm feel numb and heavy
- Allow surgery without a general anaesthetic

Benefits of a Nerve Block

- Excellent pain relief (often 12–24 hours)
- Less need for strong painkillers (opioids)
- Avoids general anaesthetic and its side effects (e.g. sickness, drowsiness)
- Faster recovery and earlier discharge home



Risks of a Nerve Block

Your anaesthetist is experienced and complications are uncommon, but possible risks include:

- Incomplete block (around 1 in 20)
→ You may need additional anaesthesia
- Bruising or discomfort at injection site
→ Usually mild and temporary
- Temporary nerve symptoms (tingling or numbness lasting >48 hours)
→ Common but usually resolves
- Permanent nerve damage
→ Very rare (approx. 1 in 15,000–30,000)
- Serious reactions to local anaesthetic
→ Extremely rare; staff are trained to manage these

Where your surgery will take place

Your procedure will take place in a purpose-built Treatment Room Suite next to the main theatres at KTC.

These rooms:

- Are designed for procedures not requiring general anaesthetic
- Meet the same infection control and safety standards as operating theatres
- Are used widely across NHS and private hospitals

Your surgery will be performed by the same consultant surgeons and anaesthetists who work in theatre.



On the Day of Surgery

- You will be welcomed by the nursing team
- You will meet your surgeon and anaesthetist
- You will change into a hospital gown

Before surgery

- Your nerve block will be performed in a monitored area
- We will ensure your arm is fully numb before starting

During surgery

- You will be awake but comfortable
- A screen will prevent you seeing the operation
- A staff member will stay with you throughout
- You should bring headphones/music if you wish

After your operation

- Your arm will remain numb for several hours (sometimes up to 48 hours)
- You may be given a sling or splint
- Staff will ensure your arm is protected before discharge

While your arm is numb:

- Protect it from injury
- Avoid heat sources (risk of burns)
- Do not use kettles, irons, or machinery

As sensation returns:

- You may feel tingling or discomfort
- Start pain relief before the numbness wears off

Wound Care and Infection

Please monitor your wound carefully.

Signs of infection include:

- Redness, swelling, heat, or increasing pain
- Pus or discharge
- Feeling unwell or fever

If concerned, please seek urgent review.

When to Seek Help

Urgent medical help is required for:

- Severe uncontrolled pain
- Shortness of breath
- Signs of infection
- Numbness persisting beyond 48 hours

Contact details

If you have any routine questions, please contact your surgeon's secretary, who can arrange for the appropriate team member to get back to you.

If numbness is persisting after 48 hours please contact the anaesthetic department at Worcestershire Royal Hospital (during office hours) or telephone switchboard (01905 763 333) and ask for bleep 700 (outside office hours) to talk to an anaesthetist.

If you have an urgent query please contact your surgeons secretary or one of the orthopaedic wards at the Alexandra Hospital (Ward 16 at time of writing).

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, you can also call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.