



bristolspineclinic

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## YOUR OPERATION

A spinal operation for degenerative conditions is usually advised as a last option when other methods such as physiotherapy, modification of activities, and pain management have failed.

Patients may decide to have an operation for several reasons. The symptoms may be severe and interfere with work, sport and leisure, or just daily living activities. The decision to proceed with an operation, therefore, depends on many factors including the severity of the symptoms, personal circumstances, lifestyle intrusion and the professional advice of the surgeon.

Whatever the individual case, Mr Patel will explain the benefits and risks of the various treatment options available and help you through the decision-making process. If you are still unsure, then, some time for reflection, a further discussion with your GP or a second specialist opinion is always worth considering.

If surgery is planned, a pre-operative health check at the hospital will normally be arranged a week or two before the operation date. A specialist Nurse Practitioner will perform routine health checks and arrange blood tests and if a medical problem is identified (for example, high blood pressure or a heart condition), the operation may be postponed until this has been treated by the family doctor or through advice from the Consultant Anaesthetist. It is important to inform the nurse of all previous medical illnesses and your current list of medication.

## YOUR OPERATION

Chris Pope, private secretary to Mr Patel, will send you details of your hospital admission. If you are unsure about anything, you may either telephone or email Chris, or talk to one of our ward nurses at the hospital. They will be happy to help and advise you.

Your operation will be performed by Mr Patel who will see you on the ward on the morning of the operation to explain the procedure once again and obtain consent. This gives further opportunity to ask any questions that you may have. You will also be seen by a Consultant Anaesthetist who will explain to you about the anaesthetic and how your pain will be controlled after the operation. There will be an opportunity to discuss any other health issues that may be relevant to your anaesthetic.

The Consultant Anaesthetist is likely to be Dr Wim Blancke with whom Mr Patel has worked as a team for over 20 years. This teamwork is important and is a reflection of good clinical practice. For this reason, the vast majority of patients accept the anaesthetist recommended by their surgeon.

## AFTER THE OPERATION

After the operation, you will be woken up and transferred to the recovery room where you will be monitored and observed by the recovery nurses. The anaesthetist will undertake routine checks and advise the recovery nurses about pain medication and fluid drips.

Once you are fully awake, you will be transferred to the ward under the observation of the ward nurses. Mr Patel will see you later the same day to check your condition and inform you on how the operation went. He will also provide you with information about what you can and cannot do during your recovery.

The nurses and physiotherapists will assist with your recovery and aim to mobilise you from bed the same evening or the following day depending on your operation and level of wound discomfort. You may also need X-rays to check the operation site.

## DISCHARGE FROM HOSPITAL

Once you are independent and able to care for yourself, you will be discharged from hospital with advice about your wound dressing, pain medication, and recuperation at home. You will be given a contact number of the hospital if you have any concerns once you are home.

We will advise you when to resume normal activities such as housework, driving and work.

An out-patient follow-up appointment will be arranged with Mr Patel at around 4 to 6 weeks after the operation. His private secretary, Chris Pope, will notify you of the appointment by post. If you have any concerns before the appointment, you can call the hospital ward nurses or Chris Pope who can contact Mr Patel for you. Alternatively, you may wish to consult your GP for advice.