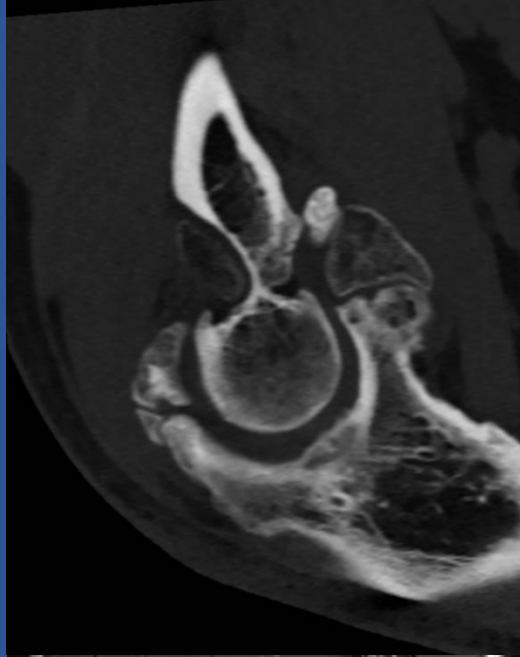


Elbow Arthroscopy



Mr Timothy J Chung

Upper Limb Orthopaedic Surgeon
MBBS (Hons) | FRACS | FAOA



0414 098 098



office@timchung.com.au



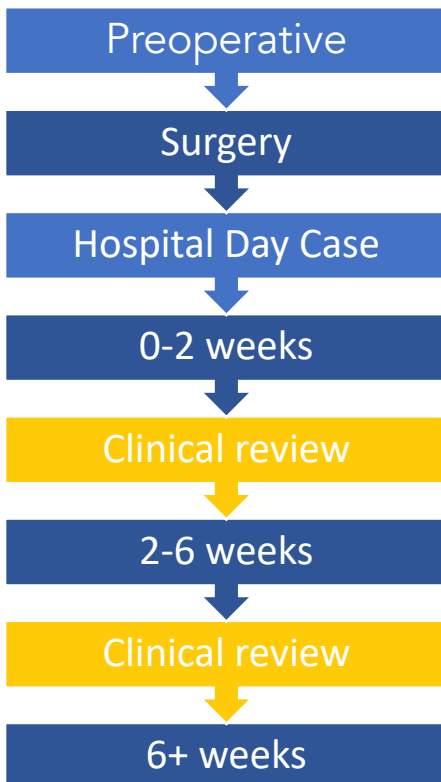
www.timchung.com.au

General Information

This is a guide for your recovery journey following your Elbow arthroscopy.

Mr Chung or other members of your care team may adapt the plan depending on you or your elbow.

If you have severe pain, issues with your wound/dressing or any other health issues please **contact Mr Chung** or consider presenting to your nearest **Emergency Department**.



Elbow arthroscopy

The goal of an **elbow arthroscopy** is to remove excess bone and release tight soft tissues to improve movement and relieve pain. Conditions that can be treated include arthritis, OCD (osteochondritis dissecans) and post traumatic conditions.

Following surgery, **stiffness is the biggest concern**. Stiffness can become permanent as early as 6 weeks post surgery. **Early movement** and exercises of the elbow is key to prevent this. Mr Chung and your physiotherapist will guide you through this.

Preoperative

Once you have decided to undergo an elbow arthroscopy there are a few things you will need to do to prepare for the surgery. These include:

- A preoperative **CT scan or MRI scan**
- **Blood tests** (FBE, UEC, CMP, Coags)
- A fitness for surgery **assessment**
- Continue **moving** your elbow (as pain permits)
- **Designating** someone to drop you off and pick you up from the hospital

Before your surgery please let Mr Chung know if you:

- Have heart or lung problems
- Have diabetes
- Take blood thinning medication
- Smoke cigarettes or other products

Surgery

Food

On the day of surgery you will need to fast from food and drink. Mr Chung or the hospital will provide you with fasting times prior to the day of your operation.

Fasting includes avoiding:

- Food
- Tea and coffee
- Chewing gum



Medications

Unless instructed otherwise, you should have your regular morning medications on the day of surgery with a sip of water.

If unsure please speak to Mr Chung about your medications prior to surgery.

Medications that we **may** withhold 2 days prior to surgery include:

- Rivaroxaban/Xarelto
- Apixaban/Eliquis
- Dabigatran/Pradaxa
- Warfarin/Coumadin
- SGLT2 Diabetic medication (Medications ending in -flozin)

Medications that **may** require altered dosing prior to surgery include:

- Blood thinning medication (Clopidogrel/Ticagrelor)
- Diabetic medication (oral and insulin)
- Immunosuppressants

Hospital Stay

Following surgery, you will wake up in the recovery suite to allow recovery from the anaesthesia. You will notice your elbow has a dressing and your arm will be in a sling. You will then be transferred to the day procedure area. You can go home, approximately 4 hours later when your pain is under control and you are eating and drinking.

Your first day in hospital may include:

- A review by a **Physiotherapist**
- An **injection** to prevent clots in your legs (DVT/PE)

Things that you are **allowed** to do straight away with your elbow include:

- Eating and drinking
- Using a mobile phone
- Using a computer



Things that you should **avoid** doing with your elbow for the first 4 weeks include:

- Driving a car
- Using your arm to go to the toilet



Dressings

You should have a dressing on your elbow at all times till the wound heals. This takes approximately 2 weeks and the dressing will be removed at your first clinical review. Dressing changes should be kept to a minimum to avoid the risk of infection.

If the dressing becomes wet or soaked with blood it will need to be changed. You are able to take a shower but you will need to change the dressing if it becomes soaked.

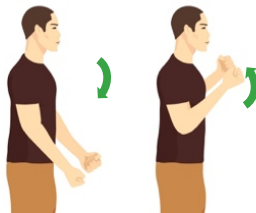
Exercises (0 – 4 weeks post surgery)

Your **sling** should be worn **as little as possible** and only when resting, sleeping and when you are outside in public areas. You should **remove your sling** as much as possible to move your elbow

Exercises should be done for around **15 minutes** on **at least three** separate occasions throughout the day (after breakfast, lunch and dinner). It is normal to have some discomfort or pain when performing exercises.

Elbow

With your thumb pointing to the ceiling, take your arm out of the sling straightening out the elbow completely then bring your hand towards your shoulder, repeat 10 times. Use your other arm to help you gain more movement



Forearm/wrist pronation/supination

With your elbow tucked into your side turn your hand to face the ground (pronation) and then turn your hand to face the sky (supination). You will need to use your other hand to grasp your wrist to help with turning.



Wrist and Hand

Grip a stress ball and hold for 10 seconds, relax and repeat 10 times.

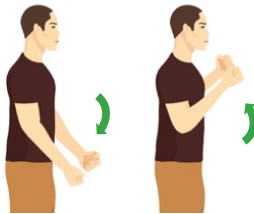
Writing and typing is encouraged to maintain wrist and hand dexterity.

Exercises (4 – 8 weeks post surgery)

Building on from the previous exercises begin adding your body weight to these exercises to gain more straightening and more bending. Add exercises to your shoulder to prevent it becoming stiff as well.

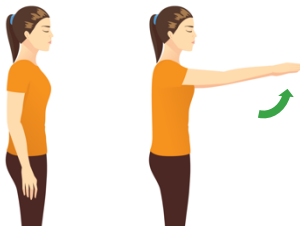
Elbow

Hold the edge of a table and tuck your elbow into your body then lean on your elbow to straighten it as much as possible. Hold for 10 seconds. Bring your hand to your shoulder and use your other hand to increase the bend. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat this 10 times.



Shoulder Movement exercises (Isotonic)

With your thumb pointing to the ceiling, lift your arm forward and hold it there for 5 seconds, slowly lower it down, repeat 10 times.



Exercises (8+ weeks post surgery)

Exercises during this period will be tailored to your specific needs/goals. Mr Chung and your physiotherapist will work with you to figure out the right exercise program.

In general exercises during this period are about achieving more elbow range of motion, building strength and achieving functional goals. Use your body weight to assist with bending and straightening of your elbow.

For your physiotherapist

Please contact Mr Chung with any questions

0-4 weeks – No lifting limit, AROM of elbow coupled with Assisted stretching, no sport

4-8 weeks – No lifting limit, Bodyweight assisted stretching, no sport

8+ weeks – No restrictions



Fellow of the Royal Australasian
College of Surgeons



Monash Health
Orthopaedic Surgery

MELBOURNE
**SHOULDER
& ELBOW**
CENTRE

