



UNDERSTANDING YOUR SURGERY

Four Corner Fusion

Overview

This operation fuses four small wrist bones together with a plate and bone graft and removes the worn scaphoid bone. It trades a controlled, predictable reduction in wrist movement for reliable, long-lasting pain relief.

About Your Procedure

Why this surgery is recommended

- A specific pattern of wrist arthritis after old fractures or ligament injury
- Wrist pain from worn cartilage between the bones
- When preserving forearm rotation while relieving pain is the goal

What happens during surgery

- An incision on the back of the wrist
- The worn scaphoid bone is removed
- Four wrist bones fixed together with a plate and bone graft
- General or regional anaesthetic; day procedure or overnight stay

After Your Surgery

- Wrist in a cast for **6–8 weeks** — must not be removed
- Finger, thumb, shoulder and elbow exercises from Day 1
- After the cast: a removable splint until the fusion is confirmed
- Hand therapy begins once the cast is off
- No driving for **6 weeks** after surgery

Important precautions:

- The bones must fully fuse before loading — confirmed on a CT scan around 8–12 weeks
- Expect roughly half of normal wrist motion — this is the accepted trade-off for pain relief
- About 5–10% of cases don't fuse first time and may need further treatment
- The plate usually stays in permanently unless it causes discomfort

Your Recovery at a Glance

WEEKS 0–8

Cast on. Finger and shoulder exercises. No wrist movement

WEEKS 8–12

Removable splint. Gentle wrist movement begins

WEEKS 12–18

Progressive wrist and grip strengthening

MONTHS 4–6

Return to work once fusion is confirmed

QUESTIONS YOU MAY WISH TO ASK

- ? What does my recovery look like for my job or sport?
- ? What are the main risks, and how likely are they for me?
- ? What pain relief will I need, and for how long?
- ? When can I return to work, and is travel safe early on?

MY NOTES
