

Trapeziectomy Surgery

The trapezium is one of the bones found at the base of the thumb. It is commonly affected by arthritis. You may have come to a joint decision to have this addressed surgically. One of the options is a trapeziectomy. This is where the bone is removed. Most of the time gap after the trapeziectomy is filled with the scar tissue over the period of time. However some patient do require ligament reconstruction, please discuss with Mr Shah.

Before Surgery

You will be seen by Mr Shah before the operation. He will confirm the correct side and will take this opportunity to draw on your hand (mark with a marking pen). This is to ensure the correct hand is operated on. If you have any questions, now may be the time to ask them.

During Surgery

An anaesthetic will be given in theatre. This may be a general anaesthetic (where you will be asleep) or a regional block (e.g. where you are awake but the area to be operated is completely numbed). You must discuss this and any risks with the anaesthetist.

When in theatre, the skin around your hand will be cleaned with antiseptic fluid and covered by sterile towels (drapes). A tight band (tourniquet) may be inflated around the upper arm. This is to limit the amount of bleeding.

An incision will usually be over the front of the hand at the base of the thumb. Trapezium can then be removed. If a ligament reconstruction is required, it is performed. The skin will then be closed by dissolvable stitches, which usually falls off after 2 weeks when you will be reviewed for a wound check.

After Surgery

It is really important you ELEVATE (keep up) your arm to limit the swelling and pain. You will have a plaster cast on your hand when you come out of theatre. This cast will be removed usually after two weeks and you will be asked you to wear a splint.

It is really important you ELEVATE (keep up) your arm to limit the swelling and pain. The scar can be painful and swollen. Rubbing with simple creams such as E45 will help with this, usually after three weeks after the operation provided your wound is fully healed.

Full recovery/ function may take many months or may never be achieved, but the pain should be greatly improved.

Type of Operation	Day Case	
Procedure Length	1 hour	
Anaesthesia	General Anaesthesia or Wide awake surgery with regional block	
Time of Work	Depending upon job	(Please discuss)
Driving	Usually 2 - 3 months	(Please discuss)