

What Is An Amputation Above The Knee?

An above knee amputation is the removal of the lower limb due to ischemic disease after other treatments, and when by-pass operations have failed. A incision is made above the knee and the femur is cut. A flap, made of muscle, tissue, and skin will be made to cover the end of the femur creating a stump. A bandage will cover the stump.

What sort of anaesthetic will I have?

The Anaesthetist will discuss with you the type of anaesthetic, which is best for you. You will have a general anaesthetic along with some nerve blocks around the surgery site. Any questions regarding your anaesthetic can be asked prior to your surgery.

What kind of pain relief will I need?

Your pain relief will be decided by your surgeon and anaesthetist on the day of your operation. After your surgery your pain should be controlled with oral analgesia such as Paracetamol or Codeine. If you require any other medications after your surgery, your doctor will complete a discharge script which will be given to you prior to your discharge to home. This script can be dispensed at the hospital pharmacy or at your local pharmacy.

What happens prior to me going home?

You will stay in hospital usually for about 5 nights. You may have some drain tubes insitu after your surgery. These will be removed prior to your discharge.

The majority of patients will be transfer to another facility for rehabilitation prior to being discharged to home. After the surgery you will have a dressing over the surgical site. If the dressing is waterproof, you can shower. You will be seen by the Allied health team on day 1 who will assess you and discuss a treatment plan appropriate for you along with an exercise program. Some other interventions which may be considered early will be the use of a wheel chair, pressure cushions for the operated leg and amputee specific rehabilitation.

Other information which may be discussed with you prior and after your surgery will be phantom sensations, and pain. This is often experienced by many patients and you will be educated on how to treat this problem if ever experienced. Hygiene and cleanliness is important to help prevent wound breakdown, infections and pressure sores.

Patients are advised to follow the following instructions:

- Avoid driving until your review at your outpatient appointment
- The dressing on the operation site is to be left intact until review. You can shower if the dressing is waterproof. No dressing is required after it is removed and you can get the wound wet in the shower and pat dry after.
- Return to work will be patient specific and as per medical advice
- Oral analgesia and ensure NSAIDS are taken with food
- Removable Rigid Dressing limb socks
- Be careful not to knock the stump as this may lead to wound breakdown or infection

Contact your local doctor for the following:

- Continual bleeding or wound discharge
- Red, inflamed or discharge from suture line
- Develop a temperature greater than 38 degrees
- Severe pain not controlled by oral analgesia
- Numbness, tingling, discolouration to operated limb

Contact

If you are unwell and unable to attend the hospital for your surgery, please contact:

Elective Bookings Service: 9342 8400

Vascular Liaison Nurse: (Mon-Wed)

Lucy Hill 9342 7403 or Pager- 20257 via Hospital Switch 9342 7000

Radiology Department: 9342 8393 or 9342 8601

If you have any queries about your operation prior to your surgery, please contact the Elective Bookings Service and asked to be put through to the Unit Liaison Nurse.

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