

Getting ready for an **operation**?

Tom Quick's helpful guide.

You have had a nerve injury and are due to come into Hospital to have an operation.

There are lots of different types of **operations** and this guide is a general guide to what is going to happen when you come in to hospital and to explain some of things that will go on so you know what you are going to see. Hopefully to make it all nice and easy for you - You can even tell you parents or carers what is going on!

Pre-admission

The first thing is getting ready for the 'admission': (Admission means coming in to hospital- Pre-admission means things we do before admission to get everything ready; so we have learnt too medical words already.)

The nurses or clinical team will weigh and measure you- your height and weight are used to make sure that you get all the right amount of medications .

Then you will have an MRSA test - **This isn't Mrs A a school teacher** but **MRSA** is a bug, a bacteria who's full name (methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus) is a mouthful so we call it MRSA. It is a bug that we don't want in hospitals and some people have it on their skin. So we have to check up your nose or at the top of your leg that there are non of those bugs hiding there!

Then there is **COVID** (who's proper name is SARS COV-2), this one, as you know, is a virus- they are much smaller than a bacteria like MRSA) to test for this it is another swab. This time again in your nose, it might be that soon we have a test where we can look in your **spit** to find the virus but for now its **snot** we are after!

COVID has been in the news a lot hasn't it? It has changed all of our lives and changed yours a huge amount. The Hospital you are going to be 'admitted' to is a very careful to not let people in with **COVID**.

Mr Quick is swabbed every week to check he doesn't have the virus and you too have to be checked, even if you have had the virus or think you have had it in the past. This is to make sure

we can be a **safe as possible** in doing your operation. It mostly doesn't really affect children but young adults can get sick from it and if you have it we need to delay your operation unless it is a real emergency.

Sometimes you have to have blood test done but Mr Quick's team will normally do these when you are asleep just before the operation so you don't have to have those when you are awake. If we do have to do a test before 'admission ' then it is an important test for us to plan how to keep you **healthy**.

You will get a list of things to do before the operation - like when to stop eating and drinking and what time to arrive at the hospital we will explain all of those now:

Admission

Coming in to Hospital is the next step. You will be nervous, **just like going to a new school or a new place**. It is a bit scary but that is **ok**, everyone is there to help you feel better and to make this all easy for you.

It will be an early start as hospitals open very early to get people (patients) ready for their operations.

You will have a **time to stop eating and drinking** and that will be hours before you come to hospital. Make sure you and your parents read the information the hospital sends you about this very carefully.

Usually you have to stop eating at least 6 hours before your operation and have no water after 2hrs before the operation. This can change though depending on the operation and type of anaesthetic.

An 'anaesthetic' is the way the doctors make you fall asleep for the operation. It is a kind of sleep where you can't feel anything and won't remember things and is the way we do operations so it is all painless for you. There is a team of people who help with the anaesthetic.

The doctor is called an anaesthetist- (you say this like this - **Ann-ee-th-E-tist**).

There is a big team all there to help you get better - they are all there **just for you**, and all focused on your care.

After the operation you will have some bandages on the bit of you that needed an operation. These are **warm and fluffy** and will stay in place for a while to keep the operation site clean and help you get better. You might feel bit confused or tired but if you do feel any pain let the nurses and doctors know and we can give you medicine to help that. It is usually totally pain free when you wake up as Mr Quick and his friends put special medicine in your skin and around your nerves to make it all numb, **it might feel tingly or heavy** though.

Then you will go home and it is important to take some medicine to keep the pain away for the next few days while the operation site gets better.

It might take weeks or even months before you see improvement from the operation as the nerves have to wake up (**they can be quite lazy things nerves!**) or to grow back (just like you growing doesn't just happen quickly but can take along time).

Mr Quick will see you again at around 2 weeks after the operation to go through the operation and to explain what he found in side you and when you can expect **things to get better**