

# Elbow Replacement Surgery

## What Is Elbow Replacement Surgery?

Elbow replacement, also known as total elbow arthroplasty, is a surgical procedure to replace a damaged or worn-out elbow joint with an artificial implant. It is typically used to treat severe arthritis or complex fractures that cannot be repaired with other types of surgery.

The goal of elbow replacement is to relieve pain, improve movement, and restore function, especially in people whose quality of life is significantly affected by elbow problems.

## When Is Elbow Replacement Recommended?

You may be considered for elbow replacement if:

- You have severe arthritis (osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, or post-traumatic arthritis)
- Pain and stiffness in your elbow significantly limit daily activities
- Other treatments, including medication, physiotherapy, or keyhole surgery, haven't helped
- You have a complex or non-healing fracture of the elbow
- You've had previous unsuccessful elbow surgery

This operation is more commonly performed in older adults or those with lower physical demands, but may also be offered to younger patients in select cases.

## What Does The Surgery Involve?

Elbow replacement is performed under general anaesthetic and takes about 1.5 to 2 hours. During the procedure:

- The damaged ends of the humerus (upper arm bone) and ulna (forearm bone) are carefully removed
- Metal stems are inserted into the bones and joined by a hinged implant
- The joint is aligned and secured, allowing for smooth, pain-free movement

You will usually stay in hospital for 1 to 2 nights after the operation.

## Recovery And Rehabilitation

After surgery, your arm will be supported in a splint or sling. You'll start gentle movements under the guidance

of a physiotherapist, with the aim of gradually regaining function without placing strain on the new joint.

Typical recovery includes:

- Return to desk-based work in 4 to 6 weeks
- Resuming light daily activities by 6 to 8 weeks
- Full recovery within 3 to 6 months

You will be advised to avoid heavy lifting or pushing to protect the implant long-term.

## Risks And Complications

Elbow replacement is a safe and well-established procedure, but like all surgeries, it carries some risks:

- Infection
- Nerve injury
- Implant loosening or wear over time
- Joint stiffness
- Dislocation of the new joint
- Blood clots or bleeding

Your surgeon will explain the risks and benefits of surgery in your individual case.

## How Long Will The Implant Last?

Modern elbow replacements can last 10 years or more, particularly in patients who follow activity restrictions. Gentle use is key to maximising the lifespan of the implant.

If needed, revision surgery can be performed later on, though this is more complex.

## Why Choose Midlands Orthopaedic Clinic?

At Midlands Orthopaedic Clinic, we offer expert-led elbow replacement surgery using the latest generation implants and surgical techniques. Our specialist team has vast experience in managing complex arthritis and trauma cases, ensuring personalised treatment and excellent outcomes.

From initial consultation to post-operative rehabilitation, you'll receive comprehensive care every step of the way.

## Get In Touch

If you're living with severe elbow pain or stiffness and think you may benefit from elbow replacement surgery, we're here to help. Contact Midlands Orthopaedic Clinic today to book an appointment with one of our experienced elbow specialists.