

Elbow Stabilisation Surgery

What Is Elbow Instability?

Elbow instability happens when the elbow joint becomes loose or gives way — often due to ligament injury, previous dislocation, or repetitive strain. You might feel your elbow is unstable during certain movements, especially pushing or bearing weight through the arm.

Surgical stabilisation is offered when the ligaments that support the elbow are damaged and the joint is no longer stable or secure.

When Is Surgery Recommended?

You may be advised to have elbow stabilisation surgery if:

- Your elbow keeps dislocating or slipping out of place
- You feel pain or a sense of giving way during movement
- You've had a previous elbow injury and still feel unstable
- Your elbow instability is affecting your ability to work, play sport, or exercise
- Scans show torn or stretched ligaments that haven't healed properly

Some mild cases can be treated with physiotherapy or bracing. Surgery is usually considered for ongoing or more severe instability.

What Does The Surgery Involve?

Elbow stabilisation surgery is performed under general anaesthetic and typically takes 1 to 2 hours. The procedure may be done arthroscopically (keyhole) or through an open incision, depending on the type of injury.

Your surgeon will:

- Reconstruct or tighten the damaged ligaments
- Use sutures, anchors, or tendon grafts to support the joint
- Remove any scar tissue or bone fragments if needed

The goal is to restore the elbow's stability while preserving movement.

Recovery And Rehabilitation

After surgery, your elbow will be supported in a brace or splint to protect the repair. You'll gradually begin physiotherapy to restore range of motion, then move on to strengthening exercises.

Recovery timeline:

- Sling or brace: 3 to 6 weeks
- Light use of the arm: 6 to 8 weeks

- Return to manual work or sport: 3 to 6 months

It's important to follow your rehabilitation plan closely to avoid overstressing the joint while it heals.

Risks And Complications

Elbow stabilisation is generally safe, but like all surgery, it carries some risks:

- Infection
- Nerve or blood vessel injury
- Elbow stiffness or reduced range of motion
- Failure of the repair or ongoing instability
- Blood clots or delayed healing

Your surgeon will explain the risks and benefits based on your individual case.

Will My Elbow Feel Normal Again?

Most people experience a significant improvement in stability, function, and confidence. You may not regain full movement if stiffness is already present, but your arm should feel stronger and more secure.

Surgical stabilisation often allows patients to return to physical work, sport, and everyday activities with greater confidence.

Why Choose Midlands Orthopaedic Clinic?

At Midlands Orthopaedic Clinic, our upper limb surgeons are highly experienced in managing elbow instability. We provide advanced ligament reconstruction techniques, accurate diagnosis, and close coordination with rehabilitation specialists to help you return to full function.

Whether your instability is due to trauma, overuse, or failed previous treatment, we offer expert care tailored to your needs.

Get In Touch

If your elbow feels unstable, loose, or keeps dislocating, we're here to help you regain control and confidence.

Contact Midlands Orthopaedic Clinic today to arrange a consultation with one of our specialist elbow surgeons. Call us or fill in our online enquiry form.