

## Complications of surgery

1. **Important – if you develop any signs of complications, you must immediately report it to Dr H.M. Van Niekerk on telephone number 012 367 4424. Even if this is after hours, the practice telephone will divert the call to Dr Van Niekerk. If you are uncertain, you are welcome to present to Kloof or Little Company of Mary casualty department (012 3674004), where the casualty doctor will examine you and contact Dr. van Niekerk directly, if needs be. This is very important as complications need to be managed early to prevent life-long problems.**
2. Some complications are rare, but can be serious. These include complications which can be ascribed to wound infection, interruption of blood supply, and nerve damage. If you develop any signs of these complications, the onus is on you to contact Dr. M Van Niekerk directly or to report to Kloof or Little Company of Mary casualty.
3. In the case where you experience sudden or increased intensity in pain after leaving the hospital, it may be attributed to post-operative swelling, with or without infection. If this swelling is not relieved it can lead to arterial blood vessel obstruction, which may lead to amputation in severe cases. These complications are serious and need urgent attention. Please contact Dr.vanNiekerk immediately or report to Kloof or Little Company of Mary casualty.
4. If you experience any loss of sensation, difficulty moving fingers/toes or other limbs which previously moved without difficulty or pain before your discharge from the hospital, it must immediately be reported to Dr. van Niekerk or the casualty doctor at Kloof. Plaster of Paris which is too tight can result in swelling, difficulty in movement of the limbs and loss of sensation. **Urgent attention to this problem is essential.**
5. Swelling of a limb, which is out of proportion to that which can be expected, must be reported immediately. Deep vein thrombosis( DVT) or pulmonary embolism ( blood clot) is a serious complication of any major operation performed on the arms ,legs or pelvis. Anti-clotting medication will be given in these cases to prevent clot formation, **but blood clots can still form.**
6. Any sign of shortness of breath or a pressure sensation in the chest, flu like symptoms or fever, must be reported to Dr. van Niekerk immediately. These symptoms can be a result of infection or a blood clot travelling to the lungs, from the arm, legs or pelvis.
7. Excessive or continuous drainage of fluid from the wound site must be reported to Dr. van Niekerk immediately. In some cases, wounds can drain fluid for a long time, but in these cases the doctor will inform you before you are discharged to go home from hospital.
8. Any allergic reaction, symptoms of shortness of breath or skin rash, can be a side-effect of medication that has been prescribed for you. It must be reported to Dr. van Niekerk immediately.
9. Antibiotics are routinely prescribed on discharge and it is imperative that the course is completed as prescribed. Pain medication need only to be used when necessary. Patients suffering from chronic pain will be prescribed medication to be used on a regular basis.
10. Dr. van Niekerk must be informed of all medical conditions and medication being used before surgery is undertaken. **This applies to ALL medication/drugs/alcohol even if you feel embarrassed about it.** All information will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Forgetting to tell your doctor about the above substances, can lead to withdrawal and failure to recognise this can lead to complications in the post-operative period. All addictions to medication and recreational drugs must be disclosed to your doctor.

If you have any queries with respect to your surgery or management, please do not hesitate to ask Dr. HM Van Niekerk. It is your right as a patient, to do so.

I the undersigned am fully aware of the content of the document above.

Signed in Pretoria on this.....day of .....20.....

..... Or .....

Patient	Signature of parent/gardian/guarantor in the case of a minor or Patient who is unable to give consent.
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