

# Mr David Houlihan-Burne

MB BS BSc (Hons) MRCS FRCS (Tr & Orth)

Consultant Orthopaedic Knee &  
Sports Injury Surgeon

fortiusclinic



Secretary: Jessica Page

Tel: 0203 693 2127

Fax: 0203 070 0106

E: [Jessica.page@fortiusclinic.com](mailto:Jessica.page@fortiusclinic.com)

E: [david.houlihan-burne@fortiusclinic.com](mailto:david.houlihan-burne@fortiusclinic.com)

W: [www.3riversclinic.co.uk](http://www.3riversclinic.co.uk)

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Dear ,

I am writing this letter specifically to yourself, as you are on my waiting list for knee replacement surgery.

In these difficult times we are unsure as to the risks of having major surgery. If you are otherwise well, then having major surgery and returning home, where you will in essence be self-isolating for a few weeks, does seem a reasonable option. However, we are not aware of the impact catching COVID-19 would be on you, if this were to happen. We are certainly anxious that the symptoms may be more severe, but we have no evidence at the moment to back this up.

I want to give you the option, that if you have significant other medical problems or feel your surgery can wait, it would be sensible to postpone the operation until this crisis is over.

However, if you are in extreme pain and are accepting of the potential increased risk that may occur should you develop COVID-19 following your surgery, then I am happy to proceed with your surgery.

I must advise you that we have had no guidance or advice from the Department of Health at all regarding joint replacement surgery, and I am aware that the NHS will be ceasing all elective surgery next week, largely to free up hospital beds and ventilators for infected patients.

I know this might be a difficult decision for you and I'd be happy to talk to you individually about it. Indeed, the decision may be taken out of our hands if the NHS asks for private hospitals to cease operating and step in and look after unwell patients.

At the moment I am continuing to undertake clinics and operating lists as normal, but this is obviously subject to change with any new guidance from the Department of health.

I would be grateful, if, on receipt of this email you could let Jessica know if you would like to proceed or postpone your surgery.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,



**Mr David Houlihan-Burne FRCS**  
**Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon**  
**Specialising in Knee Surgery**

*All correspondence to Fortius Clinic Marylebone*

**Fortius Clinic  
Marylebone**  
17 Fitzhardinge Street  
London  
W1H 6EQ

**Fortius Clinic  
City**  
75 King William Street  
London  
EC4N 7BE

**BMI Bishopswood  
Hospital**  
Rickmansworth Road  
Northwood  
HA6 2JW

**BMI Chiltern  
Hospital**  
London Road  
Great Missenden  
HP16 0EN

**One Stop Doctors**  
One Medical House  
Boundary Way  
Hemel Hempstead  
HP2 7YU