
POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS UPPER EXTREMITY SURGERY

This information will help you in your recovery after your upper extremity surgery. Please read this information carefully. Feel free to ask the nurses and doctors any questions you may have about your recovery at home. You will receive further instructions at your next doctor's visit.

1. If your pain is uncontrolled by your prescription pain medication, you may take Ibuprofen between doses of your prescription pain medication. **Policy dictates that requests for refills of and/or alternate narcotic prescription medication will ONLY be considered from 8am-5pm weekdays. No after hours or weekend requests will be accepted.**
2. Keep your "**SURGERY**" **ARM/HAND** elevated higher than your heart for at least the next 48 to 72 hours to control swelling. If swelling continues, keep your hand elevated until you speak with your doctor.
3. Apply an ice pack intermittently for twenty minutes on an twenty minutes off for at least the next 48 to 72 hours. Continue using the ice if it is helpful. (Do not put ice directly on your skin).

If these measures do not relieve your discomfort, call the office during normal business hours. If after normal business hours, report to the nearest emergency room for evaluation.

- Keep your bandages clean and dry. When bathing, securely cover your arm with a plastic bag or sponge bathe until you see the doctor.
 - Do not remove the bandages until you are seen by your doctor.
 - Remove your bandage in 3 days. Replace with Band Aid or Sterile Gauze
- Rest today. Tomorrow, increase your activity at a comfortable rate.
- Check your fingers every four hours. They should be warm and pink.
- Take your temperature in the morning and in the evening for the next seven days. Call your doctor if your temperature is 102° F or over.
- Do not take acetaminophen (Tylenol) concurrently with your prescription pain medication.
- Do not use your "**SURGERY**" **ARM/HAND** to lift, pull or push without your doctor's permission.
- Move the fingers of your "**SURGERY**" **ARM/HAND** within the limits of your bandage or cast several times per day. If your bandage permits, it is very important that you try to make a tight fist.
- Do not drive at least for today, or until your doctor approves.
- You may feel some numbness and tingling in your fingers and hand (similar to when you receive anesthesia from the dentist) as the anesthesia wears off.

Additional instructions:

Follow the instructions checked below:

- Always keep your hand and fingers elevated above your elbow.
- Use the sling until your arm no longer feels numb from the anesthesia.
- You do not need to wear a sling, but do remember to elevate your hand and fingers above your elbow.
- Wear your sling during the day while walking around. If you are sitting or lying down, prop your arm up on two pillows. (Always make sure your fingers are higher than your elbow).
- Remove your sling four to six times per day to exercise your shoulder and elbow to prevent stiffness.

When to call the doctor:

Please call your doctor if you notice any of the following symptoms:

- Redness, swelling, warmth, tenderness, drainage or a foul odor from your dressing
- Your fingers or hand become blue, pale or cool
- Some numbness or tingling in your hand or fingers is normal after anesthesia. However, if numbness or tingling occurs with changes in the color or temperature of your hand or fingers call your doctor.

During the evening or on weekends
610-973-6200
and ask the operator for the doctor on call.

Hand Therapy

- If this box is checked, your doctor has arranged your that first post-operative visit will be with our hand therapists.

610-973-6400
to schedule an appointment for:

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday