



DARIN W ALLRED M.D.
ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY AND SPORTS MEDICINE

Hand or Wrist Surgery Post Operative Instructions

Food

Start slow. It is natural to want to eat a lot after surgery. We recommend you eat small amounts of your normal diet and increase your intake as your nausea improves.

Dressing

If you have a cast or a splint, leave it on until your post operative visit. If you do not have a splint, then you can remove the dressing at 48 hrs. After 48 hrs you may remove the dressing and shower. Leave the Steri-Strips or glue in place. You may let water run over the incision but do not soak your incision in a bath, swimming pool, lake or hot tub for three weeks. Keep a Band-Aid on the incision until the incision is no longer draining (about 7 days)

Activity

I want you to be as active as your pain and swelling allows. You will need to keep your arm elevated to reduce swelling and pain.

Blood clots

Blood clots are rare after upper extremity surgery. However, if you or your family have had a blood clot or other reason to have an increased risk for a blood clot, you may need more aggressive treatment. Please discuss this with Dr. Allred within 24 hrs after surgery. What does a blood clot feel like? Usually (not always) blood clots surface a few weeks after surgery. They usually (not always) cause arm pain and new increased hand swelling. Rarely, they cause shortness of breath. If you think you may have a blood clot call the office immediately (during office hours) or go to the ER (if after hours)

Swelling

The best way to improve swelling is elevation of your hand. Ice also works if you do not have a cast or splint.

Physical therapy

We will arrange PT (if needed at your first post operative visit)

Medications

For the best pain control: Rotate over the counter ibuprofen and Tylenol. For example take regular Tylenol followed by Ibuprofen 2 hrs later. Do not take more than the recommended daily dose for each. I also recommend over the counter Pepcid or other antacid while on ibuprofen to prevent a stomach ulcer. Narcotics: see below.

Narcotics

You may need them for a few days but the quicker you stop using them the better you will feel. It is very rare to need a refill. We **DO NOT** refill medications after hours or on weekends so plan ahead. It takes about 72 hrs to get a refill. If you take narcotic medications regularly you will need to make arrangements with your prescribing provider.

Post Operative Visits

If you have a splint or cast: call for an appointment one week after surgery. If you do not have a splint or cast then call for an appointment 2 weeks after surgery.

Precautionary Measures

- 1) To prevent infection, you have been administered IV antibiotics prior to your surgery.
- 2) To prevent blood clots, you will need to be active. I want you to walk around your living room once every hour while you are awake.
- 3) If you are taking narcotic pain medication (Percocet or Vicodin), you may need a stool softener to prevent constipation. Over-the-counter medication such as Docusate or Milk of Magnesia is recommended.

Emergencies

Call the office at if you experience the following:

Incision opens

Increased redness at incision site

Pain uncontrolled by pain medicine

Uncontrollable bleeding

Fever > 101 o F or shaking chills

Difficulty breathing or chest pain

Severe pain or redness in calf

Painful swelling

Contact

Please refer to the website for the office phone number.

www.darinwallredmd.com