



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

## **Carpal Tunnel Release Surgery Post Op 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**

You can remove the dressing after 48 hrs. After 48 hrs you may remove the dressing and shower. Leave the Steri-Strips, sutures 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**

PT is usually not required after CTR surgery. I do recommend you massage your hand and work your finger range of motion as your incision starts to heal.

### **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**

Please make an appointment for 2 weeks after surgery.

### **Return to Work**

You may return to work as soon as you feel comfortable. This is usually 1-2 weeks for light duty jobs and 4-6 weeks for manual work jobs.

### **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](http://www.darinwallredmd.com)