



Dr. Kelly Proximal Humerus Fracture Postoperative Instructions

DIET

- Begin with clear liquids and light foods (jello, soups, etc.)
- Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated

WOUND CARE

- Maintain your operative dressing, loosen bandage if swelling of the elbow, wrist, or hand occurs.
- It is normal for the shoulder to bleed and swell following surgery – if blood soaks onto the bandage, do not become alarmed – reinforce with additional dressing.
- Remove the waterproof surgical dressing on the fifth post-operative day – you may shower with the incision covered with a waterproof dressing and change the dressing as needed
- NO immersion of operative arm (i.e. bath).

MEDICATIONS

Do not drive a car or operate machinery while taking narcotic pain medication

- Pain medication is injected into the wound and shoulder joint during surgery – this will wear off within 8-12 hours.
- Most patients will require some narcotic pain medication for a short period of time.
- Primary pain medication = Percocet (oxycodone) or Norco (hydrocodone)
 - Take 1 – 2 tablets every 4 – 6 hours as needed
 - Max of 12 pills per day
 - Plan on using it for 2 to 5 days, depending on your level of pain
 - Do NOT take additional Tylenol (Acetaminophen) while taking Percocet or Norco
- Common side effects of the pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation – to decrease the side effects, take medication with food.
- If constipation occurs, consider taking an over-the-counter laxative such as prune juice, Senekot, Colace, or Miralax.

- If you are having problems with nausea and vomiting, contact the office to possibly have your medication changed.
- For nausea, take the prescribed Zofran/Phenergan.
- Acetaminophen 500 mg (i.e. Tylenol) may be taken in between the narcotic pain medication to reduce the overall amount of pain medication required and increase the time intervals between narcotic pain medication usage.

ACTIVITY

- Your sling should be worn at all times except for hygiene and exercises.
- When sleeping or resting the sling may be removed as necessary for better comfort.
- Do not engage in activities which increase shoulder pain/swelling (lifting or any activity above shoulder level) over the first 7-10 days following surgery.
- Avoid long periods of sitting (without arm supported) or long distance traveling for 2 weeks.
- NO driving until instructed otherwise by a physician.
- May return to sedentary work or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable.

ICE THERAPY

- Begin immediately after surgery.
- Ice the shoulder every 2 hours for 20 minutes for the first 48 hours; you may continue to ice the shoulder periodically as necessary until your first post-operative visit – remember to keep the arm supported while icing.

EXERCISE

- You may begin elbow, wrist, and hand range of motion when comfortable after surgery.
- Begin elbow, wrist, and hand range of motion and pendulum exercises on the first post-operative day and do them 2-3 times per day.

*****EMERGENCIES*****

Contact Dr. Kelly or his PA if any of the following are present:

- Painful swelling or numbness
- Unrelenting pain
- Fever (over 101° – it is normal to have a low grade fever for the first day or two following surgery) or chills
- Redness around incisions
- Color change in wrist, hand or lower extremity

- Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
- Difficulty breathing
- Excessive nausea/vomiting

***If you have an emergency after office hours or on the weekend, call **412-262-7800** and you will be connected to our page service – they will contact Dr. Kelly or one of his partners if he is unavailable. Do NOT call the hospital or surgery center.

*****If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention, proceed to the nearest emergency room.**

FOLLOW UP CARE

- Dr. Kelly or his PA will call you on your first day after surgery to address any questions or concerns. If you have not been contacted within 48 hours of surgery, please call the office.
- If you do not already have a postoperative appointment scheduled, please contact the scheduling office during normal office hours (412-231-9272).
- This web site also includes more postoperative information for specific procedures, which may be helpful for your recovery: www.BrianKellyMD.com