



Post-operative Hand/Wrist Surgery Instructions

AFTER SURGERY:

- Please do not stop and eat a large meal on your way home, it may cause nausea and vomiting. Please start on something like ginger ale or Sprite and crackers.

PRECAUTIONS:

- Please call office if you have any signs of infection such as: elevated temperature of 101 degrees or higher, chills, productive cough, redness or drainage from incision site, foul odor from incision site.
- Please call office or nearest emergency department if you have any increased shortness of breath, decreased ability to tolerate activity secondary to chest pain, new or increasing lower extremity changes such as increased redness, and swelling or pain.
- If you have any of these concerns, or other questions, please call. During the daytime the office phone number is (940)937-3636. After hours, you may call the ED at (940) 937-9131.

DRESSING CARE:

- Treat your dressing like a cast and keep it on, clean, and dry. This will be removed at your clinic follow up appointment, and then it is okay to shower as long as your wounds are dry. Please do not soak incisions in water. No standing water such as bath water, lake water, or swimming pools/hot tubs.
- After your dressing is removed at your clinic appointment, you can cover your stitches with a band aid or gauze pad if you wish. If your dressing feels stuck to your skin as you remove it, you can soak it with some warm water or diluted hydrogen peroxide and then peel it away as the dressing softens.

ACTIVITIES:

- Use ice packs and keep your hand elevated as much as possible for the first few days. No strenuous activities until cleared by the physician.
 - Starting the same day of surgery, work on actively moving your fingers and thumb. Fully open your hand, and then make a fist. Do this multiple times daily.

- For your finger that was operated on, this may be somewhat uncomfortable initially. It is still important to move your other fingers as much as you can through a full range of motion. Also spend some time working on your surgical finger several times daily, even using your other hand to assist with motion working towards a goal of being able to place your finger tip in your palm. Some moist heat or paraffin wax baths can help with this motion after dressing removal when your incision is healed.

MEDICATIONS:

- Please call your physician or pharmacist for any questions about your medications or if for any reason you are unable to take prescribed medications.
- DO NOT drink alcohol; operate automobile or other heavy machinery while on narcotic pain relievers.
- Narcotic pain relievers are constipating. We recommend regular use of over-the-counter stool softeners such as Surfak or Colace on a daily basis while on pain medication to help reduce this side effect. Please insure you have adequate fluid intake and use a laxative as needed for constipation.

FOLLOW-UP:

- Ortho clinic in 1-2 weeks