

PATIENT DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS ELBOW SURGERY

This is an outline of instructions and information for post-operative elbow surgery patients. Although you may have been told different information from friends or others, please follow these instructions specifically; and if you have any questions, contact our office. These instructions pertain to most elbow procedures. If your particular procedure and instructions differ you will be appropriately informed.

Pain and Swelling:

The goal of pain medication is to reduce your pain and make you more comfortable. Pain medication may not completely relieve all discomfort. Control of swelling is an important part of pain control. To reduce swelling:

- 1) Use pillow to **elevate the hand** 10-14 inches above heart level. (An example would be like holding a can of soda to your mouth)
- 2) If you are placed in a splint and it is positioned so that one or more of your fingers are free, we **encourage gentle movement of those fingers while in the dressing**. If your splint blocks motion it is deliberate and we ask that finger and / or hand motion is avoided.
- 3) Use **ice packs** over the affected area (on the soft side of the dressings is preferred – if there is one) for 10 minute intervals every hour while the hand is elevated. Be careful, however, to **keep the dressing dry!** You may be given an arm sling post surgery. **Use arm sling only when ambulating for long periods of time**. Otherwise, elevate as directed above. Continued use of sling does not provide proper elevation of extremity to prevent swelling.

Dressing:

The purpose of dressings and splints is to immobilize and protect the surgery area, and to promote healing. You may take a shower or bath with your dressing and/or splint on, but keep it clean and dry. Wrap the area in a plastic bag and secure the open area with tape. Waterproof splint/cast protectors are also available for purchase at most pharmacies. If your dressing or splint becomes soaked, you should phone our office as soon as possible. Unless instructed otherwise by your doctor, do not remove your own dressing or splint. They will be changed at your physician or therapist appointment. There may be some bloody spotting on the dressing initially; this is normal. Excessive bleeding that soaks the dressing must be reported to us, please.

Diet:

Clear liquids and then advance as tolerated.

Medications:

Pain: Oxycodone 5mg every 4-6 hours as needed for pain.

Other: _____

Gradually wean to extra strength Tylenol as needed for pain. 1000mg of Tylenol every 8 hours may be taken with 800 mg of Ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin) every 6 hours with food, in addition to your pain medication.

Warnings:

Notify Dr. Badman immediately if any of the following occur:

- Excessive bleeding
- Excessive non-bloody wound drainage beyond the first 3-4 days
- Poor pain control
- Persistent Numbness or tingling of the hand
- Fever > 101.5°F after postoperative day #3
- Increased redness along incision
- Any other concerns / questions

Follow Up with Dr. Badman as scheduled

Call 800-622-6575 to verify time if unsure

After hours please contact 1-800-622-6575 and have the operator page Dr. Badman for urgent questions.