

Post Operative Instructions
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Elevation

- **Elevate your hand** at or above the level of your heart at all times for the first 48 hours.
 - This will significantly help your pain from swelling and your wound healing.
- After 48 hours, continue to elevate it if you have pain or swelling.
- If you feel throbbing, then elevate your hand.

Dressing

- **Keep the dressing clean, dry, and on at all times.**
 - Place a trash bag or something similar (loaf of bread or newspaper) over it.
 - Wrap this at the opening with a Coban or something similar.
 - This is not totally waterproof but will allow quick showers.
- Your dressing will be changed when you return to the office or to therapy.
- Try to avoid sweating while you have stitches.

Pain medication

- Take a narcotic pain pill as soon as you feel discomfort to stay in front of the pain
 - This is especially important if you had a nerve block
- The medication will not totally relieve the pain. **The goal is to make it tolerable.**
- Pain should gradually improve within several days after surgery, but it will still be there.
- Narcotic medication
 - Narcotic medication is dangerous but can be necessary right after a surgery.
 - We will prescribe only the amount you need, and we will work to transition you to other medications as soon as possible.
 - You may take 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours.
 - You may not drive, operate heavy machinery, or do anything else you would not do while intoxicated on another substance like alcohol.
- **Start taking tylenol and motrin or aleve (not motrin and aleve) when you get home**
- Tylenol = acetaminophen
 - Take 1,000 mg (1 gram) three times a day.
 - Do not drink any alcohol or take with other medications that have Tylenol in it.
 - Do not take if you have any liver issues.
- Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory medications or NSAIDs
 - Motrin = Ibuprofen = Advil Take 800 mg three times a day
 - Aleve = Naprosyn = Naproxen Take 500 mg two times a day
 - Take with food.
 - Do not take if you are on a blood thinner or have stomach issues.

Activity

- Do not use your hand or arm unless you have been told to do so.
- If your fingers are free, please work on range of motion.
 - Use the other hand to make a full fist, bending at all your knuckles.

Diet

- It is common to experience nausea following anesthesia.
- Start with small amounts of clear liquids and progress to a normal diet as tolerated.

Precautions

- Please call the office with any questions or difficulties.
 - During normal business hours - **706-494-3389**
 - After normal business hours - **706-324-6661**
- If you are unable to reach the office, then we will return your call as soon as possible.
- Please call if you experience any of the following:
 - Fever greater than 101 degrees F or 38.5 degrees C
 - Severe persistent pain
 - Drainage from the wound
 - Unusual odor from beneath the dressing
 - Persistent nausea and vomiting for more than 24 hours
- If you have any of these symptoms or issues and cannot reach the office, please go to the emergency room.

Adapting

- Consider all the daily activities that require two hands.
 - Clothing examples include tying shoes, button shirts, fastening pants or bras.
 - Daily living examples include unscrewing tops/jars and opening cans
- You may not be able to use your hand for a while, so plan for this.
 - Consider slip on shoes, pull on shirts, pull on pants.
 - Have help in the kitchen or plan to eat differently.