

## Post Operative Instructions for Hand, Wrist or Arm Surgery

Keep dressing clean and dry.

Ice packs to the operated area will help decrease swelling, but if you can't feel the cold under the bandage, then don't worry about the ice.

Elevate your hand/arm as suggested below (if your hand is throbbing, this indicates the presence of swelling).

It is best to keep your hand higher than your heart for the first 3 - 5 days after surgery. It is easiest to rest your hand on your head.

Exercise your hand/wrist/elbow and shoulder if it is not in a dressing.

- \_\_\_ Wiggle your fingers, make a fist, squeeze a ball.
- \_\_\_ Move your wrist up and down.
- \_\_\_ Bend and extend your elbow as much as you can.
- \_\_\_ Perform pendulum and wall-walking exercises with your shoulder.

Post operative medications:

- \_\_\_ Vicodin, 1 - 2 tabs every 4 hours as needed for pain.
- \_\_\_ Tylenol #3, 1 - 2 tabs every 4 hours as needed for pain.
- \_\_\_ Toradol, 10 mg., 1 tab every 6 hours as needed for pain. Take with food.

Do not drive or operate machinery while taking these medications

\*\*Do not take Toradol at the same time as any other anti-inflammatory medication (such as Ibuprofen, Naprosyn, etc.)

- \_\_\_ Ibuprofen/Motrin 600mg/800mg, 1 tab every 8 hours as needed for pain.
- \_\_\_ Keflex 250mg/500mg, 1 tab every 6 hours until bottle is finished (antibiotic).

When your hand or wrist starts to hurt, remember to take your pain medication. The anesthetic will continue to wear off, and you will feel more pain soon!

\_\_\_ Call PT at 972-6400 tomorrow to make an appointment to start therapy in ~ \_\_\_ week

Make sure you have an appointment a week after surgery.

Orthopedic Surgery appointments (408) 972-3033

Some bleeding and swelling can be expected after surgery.

Please call the orthopedic advice nurse (972-3030, or if after business hours, 362-4740) if:

- The dressing is too tight or uncomfortable
- You have unusual amount of swelling
- Temperature of 100 degrees or greater
- Foul odor or discharge
- Unexpected numbness
- Problems with medication

Thank you.

Margaret S. Cheng, MD