



Same-Day Hand Surgery: Postoperative Instructions

Activity

- No heavy lifting (greater than 10 pounds) or raising your arms above your head until you have been cleared by your surgeon
- You may drive once you are off of pain medication and if drains were placed they will need to be removed first
- In order to prevent blood clots, it is important to walk around as much as possible following this surgery

Pain

- You were likely prescribed pain medications. Take them as needed for pain. As your pain decreases you will be able to decrease the use of the narcotic pain medication and control pain with Tylenol only
- Please avoid taking NSAIDs such as Ibuprofen, Motrin, Aleve, etc as these can increase your risk of bleeding after surgery
- If you were prescribed a narcotic pain medication, it can cause constipation. In order to avoid constipation, increase your fluid intake you may also need to take a stool softener such as Colace or any of the other over the counter stool softeners
- Do not drive or drink alcohol while taking pain medication as it can make you drowsy and impair your judgment

Diet/Appetite

- You may resume your pre-hospital diet
- Drink plenty of fluids, at least eight glasses of eight ounces each day to help prevent constipation associated with pain medication.

Caring for Your Wound

- Resume your pre-hospital medications. You should follow up with your primary care physician (PCP) regarding new prescriptions and refills of your home medications; also, update your PCP on your recent hospital admission
- Please keep your arm elevated at all times to help reduce pain and swelling
- Please keep your splint on at all times, do not remove until seen for follow-up in clinic
- Please keep your splint clean and dry
- You may shower or sponge bathe but should keep dressing dry at all times; do not submerge in water
- Please continue antibiotics as directed
- Please do not drink alcohol or operate heavy machinery while taking pain medication, which may make you feel drowsy
- Please wean off pain medication over the course of the next 1-2 weeks. You may take Tylenol for moderate pain instead of pain medication. Please take as directed and do not exceed more than 4 grams in a 24-hour period as this can cause damage to your liver

- In order to avoid constipation, be sure to take a stool softener and or laxative if you are taking pain medication

Medications

- Resume your pre-hospital medications. Follow-up with your primary care physician regarding new prescriptions or refills of your home medications
- If you were given an antibiotic please complete full course. Do **not** stop taking the antibiotic just because you feel better
- Do **not** put any ointments or antibiotic creams on your incision. These will not make it heal faster

Follow-Up Appointment

- If you are not given a follow up appointment, call your plastic surgeon's office and make an appointment to be seen within one week after your surgery
- At this appointment, we will check your incision and remove any drains and/or stitches. Your surgeon will also discuss the results of the surgery and your treatment plan

When to Call Your Surgeon's Office

- If you have a fever greater than 101°F, chills, nausea, vomiting, shortness of breath, leg pain, increased incisional pain not relieved with pain medication
- If you notice signs of wound infection (redness/tenderness at or purulent discharge from your incision)
- If you have other concerns
- Please call 911 or go to the closest Emergency Department for any life threatening emergencies