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## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

### **CMC ARTHROPLASTY/Carpal Tunnel Release**

#### Activity

- Elevate the arm at all times to help reduce swelling and pain. Using several pillows, maintain the arm above chest level especially when sitting & sleeping at night.
- You may apply ice packs to your hand and wrist to help with pain and swelling as well (20-30 minutes four times per day).
- Your thumb should remain immobilized until you are seen by Dr. Day. Wiggle your non-affected fingers regularly. Gently open and close your fist to maintain digital flexibility and motion. You may use your opposite hand to assist in these exercises.
- Please avoid high force/resistance grasping using your operative hand as well as lifting objects greater than one pound for a period of one month following surgery in order to prevent wound complications.
- You may develop bruising around your forearm and elbow. Do not be alarmed; this is normal following surgery. If you develop significant arm swelling, redness, or tenderness, you should contact our office promptly.

#### Dressings

- A large bulky compressive bandage/splint has been placed over your wrist/thumb. This dressing is designed to minimize swelling in the operative extremity (and should feel “snug”).
- The splint is to be worn until your first post-operative visit. At that time you will be transitioned over to either a cast or removable splint.
- If you are experiencing significant pain and feel that the bandage is too tight, you may gently loosen the operative dressing by unwrapping and rewrapping the outside ACE bandage at any given time. Please do not remove the underlying white fluffy gauze.
- Keep your dressing/splint clean and dry until your first follow-up visit. If you wish to shower, plastic bags, saran wrap, and waterproof dressings can all be used to keep the area dry.

## Medication

- You have been prescribed the following **pain medication**:
  - Oxycodone– Please take 1-2 tabs every 4-6 hours as needed for severe pain.
    - **\*\*You will be provided only ONE narcotic pain medication prescription- no refills following your surgery\*\***
- Post-operative pain tends to be the most pronounced the first 2-3 days following surgery. Please take Tylenol, 1000mg every 6 hours for the first 3 days as this has significantly less side-effects compared to narcotic pain medication. **Do not exceed 4,000 mg acetaminophen in 24 hours from all sources.**
- You may also have been given a prescription for Zofran, an anti-nausea medication. Please take this medication as needed for nausea
- If you have any side effects (i.e. Nausea, rash, trouble breathing) from medication discontinue its use and call our office.

## Follow Up

- You have likely already been scheduled for your first post-operative visit. If you have not received an appointment please contact the office to schedule an appointment 10-14 days after your surgery.
- You will be seen by Dr. Day or his Physician Assistant for your first post-operative visit to review your intra-operative findings and to go over any questions you may have.
- Sutures will also be removed at that time.
- Call the office immediately if you develop a fever (>101.5), chills, excessive incision drainage, calf pain, or increased numbness in leg.
- If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to call the office.