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## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

### **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).
- Wiggle your unaffected fingers regularly. Open and close your fingers 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 has been placed on your hand. This dressing is designed to minimize swelling in the operative extremity (and should feel “snug”).
- 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.
- Remove the dressing 48 hours after surgery. Clean the surrounding skin with sterile water or rubbing alcohol and cover the sutures loosely with band-aids or a clean dressing. If the wound remains dry, no dressing is necessary. Be sure not to vigorously rub over any of the incision sites as they are still healing.
- Small amounts of bloody drainage, numbness at incision site, swelling, and bruising are normal findings following surgery.
- Do not use any ointments under band-aids.

### Showering/Bathing:

- You may shower normally after 48 hours after returning home. You can allow the shower water to run down the incision. There is no need to cover the wound while in the shower. If you wish to shower prior to 48 hours, just keep the dressing dry -- plastic bags, saran wrap, and waterproof dressings can all be used to keep the area dry.
- You should not scrub the incision. Be sure to pat the incision dry with a towel after showering.
- If wound drainage is noted, you should **sponge bathe instead of showering** until the drainage resolves.
- No submersion in water, including a bath, Jacuzzi, lake or swimming pool for six weeks and until given clearance by Dr. Day.

### Medication

- You have been prescribed the following **pain medication**:
  - Oxycodone – Please take 1 tab every 4-6 hours as needed for pain.
- You should also take an **anti-inflammatory** to help with post-operative swelling
  - Naprosyn (Aleve) – Please take 1 tab twice a day with food twice a day for the first 2 weeks following surgery
- 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 persistent hand numbness.
- If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to call the office.