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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Olecranon Fracture ORIF

Activity

- Rest the first few days following surgery. When sitting or lying down be sure to keep your arm elevated above the level of your heart to help decrease swelling.
- **Ice** can be used as much as possible for the first 3-4 weeks to help decrease swelling. Ice should be used frequently for 20 minutes at a time.
- Wiggle your exposed fingers regularly. Open and close your fist to maintain flexibility and motion. You may use your opposite hand to assist in these exercises.
- Please avoid high force/resistance grasping using your operative hand. Avoid lifting objects heavier than one pound for one month following surgery.
- Driving is not recommended when taking narcotic pain medication.
- Return to (sedentary) work or school the day after surgery if pain is tolerable. Return to heavy labor or excessive ambulatory activities will be determined by Dr. Willis.

Dressings

- A large bulky splint has been placed on your elbow/wrist and is designed to feel “snug”.
- **This splint is to be left in place and will be changed at your first post-operative visit.**
- The post-operative sling that you were given at the time of surgery is to be used for comfort and does not have to be worn at all times.
- Keep your dressing 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. **DO NOT SOAK** your arm in a bath tub.

Medication

- You have been prescribed one of the following **pain medications**:
 - Oxycodone – Please take 1 tabs every 4-6 hours as needed for pain.
 - Ultram - Please take 1 tabs every 6 hours as needed for breakthrough pain.

- Post-operative pain tends to be the most pronounced the first 2-3 days following surgery. Once the pain allows you to do so, transition to over the counter pain medications such as Tylenol as they have significantly less side-effects compared to narcotic pain medication.
- 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.

Physical Therapy

- The need for a timing of outpatient physical therapy will be determined by Dr. Willis and discussed at your first post-operative visit.

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. Willis 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, chest pain, shortness of breath, excessive incisional drainage, or persisting arm numbness.
- If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to call the office.