

Post Operative Instructions
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Ice and elevation

- **Elevate your hand** at or above the level of your heart as much as possible for the first 48 hours. Have your fingers pointing to the sky
 - This will significantly help your pain from swelling and your wound healing.
 - If you feel throbbing, then you need to elevate your hand
- After 48 hours, continue to elevate if you have pain or swelling.
- Apply ice if you can for 20-30 minutes several times a day
 - Ice may not work with a splint or thick bandage

Dressing

- **If you have a wrap on your arm, keep the dressing clean, dry, and on at all times unless told otherwise**
 - Place a trash bag or something similar (loaf of bread or newspaper) over it.
 - Wal Mart and Pharmacies sell a cast glove as another option
 - Wrap this at the opening with a Coban or something similar.
 - This is not totally waterproof but will allow quick showers.
- Your dressing will be changed when you return to the office or to therapy.
- Try to avoid sweating while you have stitches.
- **If you have a fancy bandaid, then you may get it wet in the shower 24-48 hours after surgery. No soaking or scrubbing. Pat dry**

Pain medication

- The medication will not totally relieve the pain. **The goal is to make it tolerable.**
 - Pain after a surgery or injury is normal.
- Pain should gradually improve within several days after surgery, but it will still be there.
- Narcotic medication
 - Narcotic medication is dangerous but can be necessary right after a surgery.
 - We will prescribe only the amount you need, and we will work to transition you to other medications as soon as possible.
 - You may take 1 tablet every 6 hours.
 - If your pain is severe in the first 48 hours, then you may take 1-2
 - You may not drive, operate heavy machinery, or do anything else you would not do while intoxicated on another substance like alcohol.
- **Start taking tylenol and mobic (aka meloxicam) when you get home**
 - **Take it like it says on the prescription bottle**
 - **Especially important if you had a nerve block**
- Tylenol = acetaminophen
 - Take 1,000 mg (1 gram) three times a day.
 - Do not drink any alcohol or take with other medications that have Tylenol in it.
 - Do not take if you have any liver issues.

- Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory medications or NSAIDs
 - Mobic = meloxicam Take 7.5 or 15 mg daily
 - Motrin = Ibuprofen = Advil Take 800 mg three times a day
 - Aleve = Naprosyn = Naproxen Take 500 mg two times a day
 - Take with food.
 - Do not take if you are on a blood thinner or have stomach/kidney issues.
- If you are taking steroids (Dose Pack), start taking them when you get home
 - Do not take steroids with NSAIDs
 - Begin NSAIDs after finishing the 6 days of steroids
- Gabapentin = Neurontin
 - It will make you drowsy and is meant to be taken at nighttime
- Ondansetron = Zofran
 - For nausea after surgery. This can be related to anesthesia or narcotics

Activity

- Do not use your hand or arm unless you have been told to do so.
- If you were told you can use it, then limit how much weight you pick up
 - Okay for toothbrush, fork/spoon, typing, and simple activities of daily living
 - Nothing heavier than a toothbrush to start
- If your fingers are free, please work on range of motion.
 - If instructed, take the other hand to make a full fist, bending at all your knuckles.

Diet

- It is common to experience nausea following anesthesia.
- Start with small amounts of clear liquids and progress to a normal diet as tolerated.

Precautions

- Please call with any questions or difficulties.
 - During normal business hours - **615-547-8873**
 - After normal business hours - **615-342-6300**
- If you are unable to reach the office, then we will return your call as soon as possible.
- Please call if you experience any of the following:
 - Fever greater than 101 degrees F or 38.5 degrees C
 - Severe persistent pain
 - Drainage from the wound
 - Unusual odor from the dressing
 - Persistent nausea and vomiting for more than 24 hours
- If you have any of these symptoms or issues and cannot reach the office, please go to the emergency room.

<https://tn.hughston.com/providers/melton/>

- Electronic copy of these instructions under “patient resources”