

## **Post Op Hand/Wrist Instructions**

### **Instructions**

#### **Exercises:**

You may gently flex and extend the fingers and thumbs as much as the splint/dressing will allow and is comfortable for you. Do not lift anything heavier than a pencil for the first 2 weeks.

#### **Ice/Elevation:**

For the first 2-3 days, elevate the operative arm on pillows at or above heart level while resting at home. It would be best to sleep with it elevated on a pillow for the first two or three nights. After the first 2-3 days, additional swelling of the hand, fingers or wrist may be treated with elevation as needed. You may use an ice pack as needed for swelling and pain, taking care not to get the dressing wet.

#### **Dressing:**

Keep your dressing on, clean and dry. You may remove the dressing in 3 days. If you have a brace, continue to wear it for 2 weeks. You may place a bandage over the incision if the stitches become irritated from the brace. An appointment has been made for suture removal and inspection of the hand. Do not remove the stitches yourself or you may develop wound complications or an infection.

#### **Bathing:**

You may shower after the bandage is removed in 3 days. Do not "scrub" the incision, just gently pat to dry. Do not soak the incision in water for 2 weeks. Except for showers, the incision/bandage should be kept dry while the stitches are in. Hand infections are often serious so please keep your hand dry and clean. It is normal to have a small amount of light redness around the incisions.

#### **Medications:**

Resume your regular medications unless directed otherwise. You may use Tylenol, Motrin, or other over the counter medications to help with pain. In some cases, narcotic pain medications are prescribed. Please take your post-operative pain medications as prescribed on the bottle. Do not take on an empty stomach. Guard against constipation by taking a stool softener (see constipation protocol). If you are having difficulty controlling your pain with the prescription you have been provided, please contact my office.

**DO NOT** Drive, operate hazardous machinery, drink alcoholic beverages, or make important personal or business decisions for 24 hours after surgery, or while taking your pain medication.

#### **Report these signs immediately to your doctor:**

Excessive swelling/redness around your incisions, temperature of 101.5 or higher, excessive pain, excessive drainage of blood or fluid, uncontrolled nausea or vomiting.