

From the office of:

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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

PROCEDURE: MINOR HAND SURGERY (carpal tunnel, trigger finger, etc)

Diet: Begin with liquids and light foods (crackers, soup, etc.). Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated. You have been given a prescription for an anti-nausea medication to be taken if needed.

Pain Medication: You have been given a prescription for narcotic pain medicine. These types of medications can cause side effects including nausea, constipation, sedation and confusion. We recommend these only be used for 1 to 2 weeks after surgery. Do not drive while taking narcotic pain medication. An over-the-counter stool softener or laxative, such as Colace, Dulcolax, or Senokot, is recommended to prevent constipation. At any time, acetaminophen (Tylenol) may be substituted instead of your narcotic medicine and used for pain control. Do not exceed 3000 mg of acetaminophen in a 24 hour period. Do not combine with alcohol.

Wrist/Hand Response to Surgery: It is normal to have pain and swelling in your wrist and hand after surgery. It will take several weeks for this to go away. It is also common to notice bruising around the wrist as the swelling resolves.

Ice: Keep ice on your surgical site for 30 minutes at a time, then 30 minutes off. We recommend having two ice packs. Keep the unused pack in your freezer and rotate the packs on and off the surgical site as often as needed. Continue to use the ice as often as possible for the first 3-4 days, then as needed for pain relief.

Wound Care: You will be sent home with a soft dressing on your hand/wrist. You may remove this on post-operative day #3 and replace with a clean, dry gauze dressing. After that, you may shower and wash your hands but keep the surgical incision covered and clean until the stitches are removed at your follow-up visit.

Exercises: Beginning post-operative day #1, perform the following exercises.

- Hand flexion and extension exercises: Open and close fingers completely 10 times.
- Do these at least 3 times a day.

Weight-Bearing: You may lift as much as you feel comfortable in the operated hand.

Driving: You will be unable to drive until you are off narcotic medications. This will be approximately 1 week after surgery, on average. It is important to regain adequate arm control before operating a motor vehicle. It is important that you feel very confident in your ability to respond quickly to changing conditions before attempting to drive. Make sure you can safely get in and out of your car, as well.

Appointment: A follow-up appointment should be scheduled for you. If you didn't receive an appointment, or if you need to change your appointment time, please call our office at 406-454-2171.

Problems: If you develop severe pain, a fever greater than 101.5°, redness around the incision, thick yellow drainage from the incision, excessive bleeding, or persistent nausea and vomiting please call our office at **406-454-2171**.

Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Our staff will be available to answer questions

Weekends & Evenings

Our after-hours emergency exchange will be able to contact Dr. Blackman

For more information, please visit ajborthopedics.com

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