



## Duke Orthopaedics: Upper Extremity Division

*Christopher Klifto, MD & Alix Ackerman NP-C*

3609 SW Durham Dr, Durham, NC 27707

### Discharge Instructions after Carpal Tunnel Surgery

#### Dressings:

- A soft dressing will be placed after surgery. Please keep in place for 3 days. After 3 days, you may remove the bandage and cover with Band-Aid **only** if the incision is not dry. The incision must stay dry until 5 days after surgery (2 days after bandage removal).
- The dressing **CANNOT** get wet. If it gets wet, please contact the office for recommendation about wound care needs

#### Pain Management/Medications:

- You were given local anesthesia of your hand. Your hand may be numb still before you are discharged, but expect normal post-operative pain as the anesthesia wearing off.
- You may use ice on the wrist through the dressing intermittently over the first 48 hours after surgery and as needed thereafter for pain and swelling control.
- Please resume all normal medications the day after surgery unless otherwise instructed.
- Pain medicine has been prescribed for you. Use your medication liberally as directed over the first 48 hours, and then begin to taper your use.
  - No driving or drinking alcohol while taking narcotic pain medication
- You may take Extra Strength Tylenol or Tylenol in place or in conjunction with you prescribed pain medication. Do not exceed 4,000mg Tylenol per day (including Tylenol in certain prescribed pain medications like Percocet or Norco)
- It is okay to take Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or Naproxen (Aleve) as needed for pain and inflammation

#### Activity:

- You are able to, and encouraged to, move your fingers hand, and wrist immediately following surgery. There are no restrictions on the movements of the hand or wrist.
- No lifting greater than 1-2 pounds.
- Showering: cover hand with grocery bag and tape to prevent ANY moisture getting to the incision for the first 5 days. The patient may wet the incision in the shower or with hand washing beginning on postoperative day 5, however has been advised not to soak the incision after suture removal at approximately 2 weeks postoperatively.

#### Contact:

- During business hours for urgent or routine questions, call Faith and Emily at the office: 919-403-3057
- After hours for emergent questions or concerns call and ask for the orthopaedic resident on call: 919-471-9622
- Contact the office or emergency on-call resident if you notice any of the following:
  - Excessive redness or warmth of the incisions
  - Drainage for more than 4 days after surgery
  - Fever of more than 101.5 F
  - Worsening numbness of the hand
  - Pain, redness, and swelling in your leg



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**-Go directly to the closest Emergency Room if you develop chest pain, difficulty breathing, or any complications that require immediate attention.**

Follow-up:

**You should have a post operative appointment about 14 days after your surgery. A post-op appointment should already be scheduled for you. If you do not have an appointment in 2 weeks or if you need to change the appointment, please call 919-471-9622.**