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POST-OPERATIVE EDUCATION: CARPAL TUNNEL RELEASE

SLING:

You will use a sling following surgery. This should be worn as needed for comfort or as directed by your surgeon.

MOVING YOUR WRIST:

You may gently move your elbow and shoulder following surgery. You will be placed in a soft dressing during surgery. Please keep it clean and dry and do not remove. You may begin gentle range of motion of your wrist and fingers as soon as you are comfortable. Use your hand only for light activity such as eating. DO NOT use your operative arm for lifting, pushing, pulling or carrying. Your surgeon will remove the dressing at your first clinic visit and explain how to progress your activity level.

ICE:

Please note that with the dressings placed during surgery, you may notice decreased benefit from the ice. Use as needed and if you notice benefit. Ice is most helpful in the first 3 days after surgery, but can help up to 2 weeks after surgery. You may use a commercially available ice bag or fill a large plastic bag with ice and water. (Do not place a plastic bag directly on your skin, rather place a towel on your wrist in between your skin and the ice bag.) You can ice your wrist 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off throughout the day. Do not ice an area longer than 30 minutes at a time, as this can cause frost bite. We do not recommend that you use heat, as this can increase swelling.

BANDAGES:

Leave your dressing clean and dry and do not remove until your postoperative clinic visit. Your surgeon will remove the dressing and discuss wound care at that time.

MEDICATIONS:

Narcotic pain medicine (such as Percocet – oxycodone or Norco – hydrocodone): Take this AS NEEDED only. Start with Percocet (stronger) if given a prescription for multiple narcotics. Transition to Norco (less potent) as your pain improves. You may stop narcotics whenever you can tolerate the pain. Do not take additional Tylenol (also called acetaminophen) with these medicines, as they already have Tylenol in them. You may SUBSTITUTE Tylenol for a narcotic pill if you choose to. Be certain that you do not exceed the maximum Tylenol dose on the Tylenol bottle.

Stool softener: Pain medicines often cause constipation. It is best to take this medicine when you start taking narcotics and before you have a problem.

Zofran (ondansetron): You may take this medication if you are having nausea or vomiting.

It is OK to take over-the-counter NSAIDs (Ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil, Naproxen, Aleve etc...) along with your pain medicine to increase the pain relief. You may take UP TO 4 Advil (800mg Ibuprofen) THREE times a day. You may take UP TO 2 Aleve twice a day.

FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS:

You should have a **follow-up appointment** with your surgeon in about 2 weeks. You may also have an additional visit with the Physician's Assistant within a few days of your surgery. Call (480) 964-2908 right away if you do not have an appointment already scheduled. We will check your incisions and remove any sutures at the 2-week visit. We will also answer any specific questions you may have about your surgery. We will consider getting you into Physical Therapy if this has not been arranged, as many patients benefit from PT after elbow surgery.

CALL OUR OFFICE at (480) 964-2908 with any urgent or emergent questions or concerns that you may have, or if you develop swelling in your leg with calf pain, swelling that will not go away when you elevate your leg, a temperature above 101.4, or drainage from your incisions.

If you experience high fever (above 102.5), chest pain, difficulty breathing, fainting: go to an **Emergency Department** close to your house.