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Post-Operative Instructions

Distal Biceps Repair

ACTIVITY

Rest the first day after surgery. You should move your wrist and hand at least four times a day as directed by the physical therapist you saw while in the Hospital for Special Surgery. You will be in an elbow brace at all times and will move your elbow in physical therapy.

BANDAGE

You will have bulky bandage over your operative elbow. This bandage can be removed 2 days after your surgery and the sutures should be covered with a dry dressing. Your sutures will be removed on your first office visit approximately 7-14 days post operatively.

SHOWERING

You must keep the incision dry to prevent an infection as it is healing. Once you remove the bandage you can take a shower with the arm and brace completely sealed with a plastic bag and tape. Try to avoid the shower from hitting the incisions directly. When you get out of the shower dry the arm completely and cover the incisions with dry gauze. Do not apply creams, ointment or lotions to your incision while it is still healing (approximately 3 weeks). You should wash under your arm daily.

MEDICATIONS

You will receive a prescription for pain medication prior to your discharge from the hospital. Take one tablet for mild to moderate pain and two tablets for more severe pain. Please make the hospital staff aware of any allergies you may have to avoid medical complications. You may also receive an anti-inflammatory medication to reduce swelling. This may be taken with your pain medication. If you find that you are constipated from the medications, please feel free to use an over the counter stool softener or laxative.

COLD THERAPY UNIT/ ICE

Prevention of post-op swelling or inflammation is an important part of your recovery. Apply icepack/ gelpack/ frozen peas to the surgical site 20 minutes 4 to 6 times a day or use your cold therapy unit as directed in the instructions. Also, it is important to apply the ice/cold therapy 10-20 minutes after completing your physical therapy.

DRIVING

You may not drive while wearing a sling or elbow brace.

NORMAL SENSATIONS AND FINDING AFTER SURGERY

- a. Pain
- b. Swelling and warmth up to 2 weeks
- c. Small amounts of bloody drainage for first few days
- d. Numbness around the incision area
- e. Bruising
- f. Low grade temperature less than 101.0 for up to a week after surgery.
- g. Small amount of redness to the area where the sutures insert in the skin

NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IMMEDIATELY IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS OCCUR

- a. Change is noted to your incision (i.e. increased redness or drainage)
- b. Temperature greater than 101.0
- c. Fever, chills, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- d. Sutures become loose or fall out and incision becomes open
- e. Drainage becomes yellow, puss like or foul smelling
- f. Increased pain unrelieved by medication or measures mentioned above.

REMEMBER TO CALL OUR OFFICE TO SCHEDULE YOUR POST-OPERATIVE APPOINTMENT (APPROXIMATELY 7-14 DAYS FROM SURGERY)