

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS - PROXIMAL HUMERUS FRACTURE

Post-op guide

- Sling x 4-6 weeks
- Begin pendulums and scapula retraction, elbow, wrist and hand motion as able
- No abduction over shoulder height for 4 weeks
- Do not hold anything heavier than a cup of water
- Full motion at 6-8 weeks

MOVEMENT

For the first 4-6 weeks after surgery, always wear your sling, including while you are asleep. You may remove the sling to shower and to perform range of motion exercises for your elbow, and the passive range of motion exercises for the shoulder. You should flex and extend your elbow and wrist 3 to 4 times a day to prevent stiffness. Do not move your elbow away from your body as this may damage the repair. **No driving** while you are in the sling.

ICE / ELEVATE

Use **ice** to help decrease swelling and pain after your surgery. May use at intervals of 20-30 minutes ON with at least 30 minutes OFF. Do not use ice while you are sleeping. You may decrease the frequency of icing over the next couple weeks.

In addition, **elevate** your hand above your elbow, and elbow above your heart with a pillow. This will help reduce swelling.

MEDICATIONS

If you were given a nerve block for anesthesia, it will wear off over 12-24 hours. During this time, you will have little to no feeling in the body part where you had surgery. If an injection of local anesthesia was injected into your wound, this will wear off in 5-6 hours. Therefore, begin taking the **pain medication** (e.g. Tramadol, hydrocodone, oxycodone) when you begin to have pain to prevent you from having severe pain. Take the pain medication as needed, every 4-6 hours. You can substitute **Tylenol** for the pain medication as able. Take a **stool softener** and drink plenty of fluids until you are having normal bowel movements. If you are given a prescription for **Aspirin** to help thin your blood and prevent blood clots, take as directed.

The day after surgery you can take prescribed **NSAID** (ketorolac, Celebrex, meloxicam, diclofenac) or 600 mg of **Ibuprofen** (Advil/Motrin) every 6 hours to help with inflammation and pain to help decrease narcotic pain medication.

DRESSING / BANDAGES

Keep your dressing clean and dry, but you may remove the gauze dressing **3 days** after surgery and replace with waterproof band-aids as needed. Your stitches will likely be dissolvable and under the skin; leave the skin glue or steri-strips in place until they begin to fall off after about 1 week. It is okay to shower and let your incisions get wet **3 days** after surgery. Until then, wrap with plastic to shower. No submerging in water for 2 weeks.

DRIVING

You may not drive until advised by physician. Generally, you need to be off narcotic pain medication and **out of the sling**. If you are going on a longer trip (>1 hr) within the first few weeks, please notify your physician.

APPOINTMENT

You will have a post-op appointment 6-10 days after surgery. Please call with any questions or concerns before then. You may begin physical therapy within 1-2 weeks after surgery.