

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS - ELBOW ARTHROSCOPY

MOVEMENT

You can move your elbow as much as tolerated. You should come out of your sling multiple times a day to move the elbow. The sling is for comfort only. No driving while on pain medication or using the sling.

ICE / ELEVATE

Use ice to help decrease swelling and pain after your surgery. May use at intervals of 20 minutes on with at least 30 minutes off. Do not use ice while you are sleeping. If you received an ice machine, you can use 30 minutes at a time. You should keep the ice machine for approximately two weeks.

In addition to icing your elbow, elevate your arm while at rest. This will help reduce swelling.

MEDICATIONS

If you were given a nerve block for anesthesia, it will wear off over 18-24 hours. During this time, you will have little to no feeling in the body part where you had surgery (i.e. arm). If an injection of local anesthesia was injected into your elbow, this will wear off in 5-6 hours. Therefore, begin taking the medication (e.g. Norco, Percocet, etc.) immediately when you begin to have pain. This will prevent you from having severe pain. Take the pain medication as needed, every 4-6 hours.

One day after your surgery, you can supplement your pain medication with an anti-inflammatory (e.g. Advil, Aleve, etc.) – this will help you wean from the narcotic pain medication.

DRESSING / BANDAGES

Keep your dressing clean and dry. You may remove the dressing two days after surgery. Please place waterproof band-aids over the incision sites. It is okay to shower two days after surgery – keep incisions clean and dry.

DRIVING

You may drive 3 to 5 days after surgery if you are not taking pain medication.

APPOINTMENT

Your post-operative visit should be scheduled 7-10 days after surgery. At that visit you will be given a prescription for therapy.