

WESTERN AVENUE DAY SURGERY CENTER

Plastic, Reconstructive and Cosmetic Surgery
Surgery of the Hand

244 WESTERN AVENUE
SOUTH PORTLAND, MAINE 04106-2496
TEL. 207.775-3446 FAX 207.879.1646

Postoperative Instructions for HAND SURGERY

MEDICATION & COMFORT:

- **Take pain medications with food**, according to instructions on bottle. **No alcohol** while on pain medicine.
- No smoking for a minimum of 48 hours to prevent bleeding and delayed healing.
- Take your first pain medicine when you feel any discomfort and as needed. That means your hand may "wake up" in half an hour. Pain medicines may cause drowsiness and constipation.
- Please remember that refills will only be considered during office hours, 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday. If you feel you need more pain medicine, please call during these times.
- You may take Tylenol when off prescription pain medication unless otherwise instructed.

ACTIVITY:

- Maintain flexibility of unaffected parts, especially your elbow and shoulder, by doing gentle motion exercises.
- No lifting or working with affected arm.
- No driving until permitted by your physician.

THERAPY:

- Elevate hand above your heart at all times for 4-5 days. This will improve circulation and minimize pain by keeping swelling down. Use pillows to prevent arm fatigue.
- We do not recommend routine use of slings. They keep your hand at or below heart level. If you have a sling, be sure to take off the temporary sling when your arm wakes up and you have full sensation and movement of arm.
- Leave your bandage on and keep it clean and dry to avoid infection. You may shower with your hand/arm covered with a plastic bag.
- Check all exposed fingers for color and warmth. Notify your doctor if fingers are blue or cold and numb.
- **Call 775-3446** any time if:
 - a) fever and chills
 - b) severe pain not responding to medications
 - c) severe swelling not subsiding with constant elevation
 - d) bleeding through bandage

FOR ENDOSCOPIC CARPAL TUNNEL RELEASE: BEGINNING TOMORROW.

- Use affected hand gently.
- Move your fingers - grip and straighten to prevent stiffness. You should be able to make a fist by the time you come back next week.
- Use operative hand to dress or eat.
- Do nothing that gives you pain.
- If bandage becomes too tight, you may loosen the ace wrap.

I have received the above instructions.

Signature *X* _____

Relationship to patient _____ Date _____

Next appointment:

Pain medication:

Next dose due: