Postoperative Instructions for HAND SURGERY

ACTIVITY

* Maintain flexibility of the unaffected parts of your arm, especially your elbow and your shoulder, by doing gentle motion exercises.
* No lifting or working with the affected arm.

HOME CARE

* Keep dry for \_\_\_ days. You may shower with your hand/arm covered with a plastic sleeve.
* Elevate your arm above your heart with pillows to minimize pain and swelling and to improve circulation. We do not recommend the routine use of slings; they keep your hand at or below heart level.
* No smoking after surgery to prevent possible bleeding and delayed healing.

WHAT TO EXPECT

* Moderate discomfort and swelling.

MEDICATION & COMFORT

* You may take \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for pain relief.
* Pain medications may cause drowsiness, upset stomach, and constipation.
* Take pain medications with food.
* Do not drink alcohol or drive while taking prescribed pain medication.
* Refills are only available during office hours – 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday. If you feel you need more pain medication, please call during those times.

CARPAL TUNNEL RELEASE – BEGINNING TOMORROW

* Use affected hand gently; you can use it to dress or eat, but do nothing that gives you pain.
* Move your fingers – grip and straighten them to prevent stiffness. You should be able to make a fist by your follow-up appointment.
* If bandage becomes too tight, you may loosen the ace wrap.
* Numbness may persist a few days following surgery.

CALL THE OFFICE (775-3446) IF YOU NOTICE

* Spots of drainage or bleeding that soak through the bandages.
* Severe pain not responding to medication.
* Severe swelling not subsiding with constant elevation.
* Fever greater than 100°F.
* Blue or cold and numb fingers.

I have received the above instructions. Signature X \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to patient \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_