



Ph: 313-749-0370 Fax: 313-447-2234

Dr. Sarmast Post-operative Instructions (Hand/Wrist/Elbow)

You have just undergone surgery and are now on your way to recovery! To minimize the pain and discomfort of surgery, please review the instructions listed below:

Swelling

Swelling is natural after surgery for the first few weeks. Reducing swelling helps speed recovery and will lessen your pain. **Icing** is very important in the initial post-operative period and should begin immediately after surgery.

Use icing machine continuously or ice packs (if machine not prescribed) for 30-45 minutes every 2 hours daily until your first post-operative visit

Care should be taken with icing to avoid frostbite to the skin.

Elevate your arm above your heart. The best way to do this comfortably is to lie flat on your back with your hand resting on a few pillows. Elevate your hand for at least three days after surgery.

Wound Care

_____The postoperative dressing/splint should be left intact until you see your doctor. Loosening the ace bandage can sometimes help. Sponge bathing is ok but be sure not to get your dressing wet. Taping a plastic bag or garbage bag around your arm is advised or you may purchase cast protectors from your local pharmacy.

OR

_____You may remove your dressing 3 days after surgery. You may apply a new dressing to the wound on the third day after surgery with dry gauze and tape. You may shower and let warm soapy water run over wound. Do not scrub wound. Be sure to pat dry and cover with dry gauze and tape. Do not use ointments or lotions at this time. **Wipe incision twice daily with alcohol wipe after dressing is removed.**

After removing your dressing, monitor for any signs of infection (excessive redness, warmth,

pain out proportion) and let the office know if any of these signs or symptoms should develop.

Avoid direct exposure of the scar to sunlight for 1 year after surgery and use high SPF sunblock if necessary

Please use the wound care smart kit mailed to your house as directed by your physician.

Activities

Do not make important decisions in the next 24 hours while anesthesia continues to wear off.

If you were given a nerve block, please wear a sling until you regain function of your elbow and hand. You may wear for general comfort postoperatively while outside of the home as well.

Do not engage in activities which increase pain/swelling.

Avoid long periods of sitting or long distance traveling for 2 weeks.

NO driving, operating machinery or alcohol consumption while taking narcotic pain medications. NO driving while still using sling.

May return to sedentary work ONLY or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable, unless otherwise discussed with Dr. Sarmast.

Some or all of your fingers may have been left free of your dressing so that you can move them. Finger movement, if allowed, can reduce stiffness and swelling.

Make frequent gentle fists, 10 times an hour while awake.

Start walking as soon as possible, as this helps decrease the chance of blood clots.

Medications

Pain medications have been prescribed. Please take them as directed. Pain medications can often cause nausea, constipation and itching. Do not drink alcohol, drive or make important decisions while taking narcotic pain medications.

Your prescription is _____ .

_____ Take over the counter tylenol (acetaminophen) as directed on packaging, unless you have pre-existing liver problems or allergy to this medication.

_____ Take anti inflammatories as tolerated. over the counter Ibuprofen/motrin/NSAIDs unless you have history of stomach pain, ulcers, or GI bleeding. You may take 600 mg every 8 hours as needed for pain. (Do not use in case of broken bones/fractures). Do NOT take or combine these medications if Dr. Sarmast has already prescribed you an anti-inflammatory such

as Naprosyn, Meloxicam, or Ibuprofen.

Pain medications may cause constipation. Please take **stool softeners found over the counter as directed**. These include Docusate/Colace, Miralax, and Senna. Ask your pharmacist for more information.

Diet

Begin with liquids and light foods, such as crackers and clear liquids. Advance to your normal diet once liquids and lighter foods are well tolerated.

Therapy

Dr. Sarmast will discuss physical therapy (PT) with you at your first postoperative visit, unless otherwise already discussed preoperatively.

Follow-up:

Please call Dr. Sarmast's Office (313-749-0370) to schedule an appointment to be seen on _____ or 14 days postoperatively.

If you have any fevers (temperature >100.5), yellow or greenish drainage, excessive warmth or pain, cool digits, numbness or tingling, uncontrolled continuous bleeding, please call the office immediately.

I have read and understand the above discharge instructions:

Patient or Representative Signature

Nurse Signature

Date