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Elbow Ulnar Nerve Transposition or Other Nerve Decompression Surgery

Activity: After your elbow surgery, you will be placed in a padded dressing. There may be swelling of the hand and wrist following surgery. You are encouraged to keep the hand elevated in a sling or on a pillow when lying down. Your fingers will be exposed, so try to move them as much as possible to avoid joint stiffness and swelling. Use the elbow within a comfortable range of motion within the first 48 hours.

After 48 hours, you are encouraged to use the arm for only light activity until you are seen in the office. Avoid heavy lifting. Use ice packs to the elbow for the first 48 hours after surgery. Apply the ice as frequently as needed after surgery. After 48 hours, you may use the ice packs two or more times a day for 20 minutes at a time, if desired for comfort. It is normal for the arm to be painful after surgery.

Driving: You may drive a vehicle if you are able to safely operate the vehicle. You cannot drive if you are taking narcotic pain medication.

Work: You may return to work as soon as you feel able and if performing your regular job is possible given your activity restrictions (otherwise we will discuss return to work at your first post-op visit).

Dressings: Keep the postoperative dressing clean, dry and intact until 48 hours after surgery at which point it may be removed. After 48 hours, you may use the arm for light activity until you are seen at the first postoperative visit. Try to keep the wound dry and covered with a large Band-Aid. Showering is permitted, however, only Hibiclens soap is permitted on the area of the surgical incision. If the incision does get wet, clean it with rubbing alcohol, pat it dry with a clean gauze pad and cover it with a dry Band-Aid.

Medications: You may resume your normal medications that you took prior to surgery. Your prescription for pain medication was sent to your pharmacy before the surgery. You should not require any more pain medication than we ordered before your first office visit.

If you are not taking the prescribed pain medications, you may take Extra-Strength Tylenol as directed on the label. You may take over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medications such as Advil or Aleve if you know you can tolerate those medications and are not taking blood thinners. Once the nerve block begins to wear off, start your pain medicine.

Follow up: Make an appointment to be seen approximately _____ days after surgery.

I will discuss the procedure and the findings during surgery at this visit.

Problems: Complications from elbow surgery can occur and you must be aware of the early warning symptoms of

some of the more serious problems that may arise. The risk of surgery is never “zero”. Call the office for a temperature over 101 degrees or pain not controlled by the pain medication.

If there is significant swelling around the surgery, extreme pain or numbness that was not present before the surgery even after the nerve block has worn off, **CALL THE OFFICE OR EMERGENCY ROOM.**

If you have any questions or problems, please call the office. The office is open Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm and can be reached at 860-649-2267. For emergencies, you should call this number and talk with me or the covering doctor.