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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: ELBOW FRACTURE

1. You may slowly resume a regular diet as tolerated. We recommend you start slowly with clear liquids, diluted Gatorade, chicken/beef broth & crackers. As soon as you get home, take small bites of food (1/4 turkey sandwich, diluted Gatorade, chicken soup, crackers) and 30 minutes later take your first pain pill (Percocet). Repeat this process 45-60 minutes later and take a 2nd pain pill (Percocet). Repeat again 45-60 minutes later and take an Oxycontin. From this point forward, take Percocet 1-2 tabs every 4-6 hrs and Oxycontin 1 tab every 12 hours. ***It's important to stay ahead of pain, but do not take the pain pills if you are sedated.***
2. Please keep your splint clean, dry, and intact until your 1st post-operative visit which should be ~7-12 days after your surgery.
3. Elevate your operative extremity as much as possible by keeping your elbow above your heart and your wrist and fingers above your elbow.
4. You may try to ice your elbow for 30 minutes at a time, 2-3 times each day but this typically is less helpful after surgery because the splint limits the ability for the ice to make the surgery site cold. It is very important however, that you not let your splint get damp or wet in the process.
5. You may take a bath with assistance as long as you keep the splint dry. Wash the axillary area (arm pit) daily with soap and a moist towel.
6. Your wrist may be immobilized, but exercises to work on flexing and extending your fingers will assist the elevation in minimizing swelling after surgery.
7. Please to not use the operative extremity for any lifting, pulling, or pushing activities.
8. Your sling should be worn for the first 2 weeks when you are out of the home to provide both comfort and support. Otherwise, we prefer that you come out of the sling as often as possible to assist you in elevating the extremity.
9. It will be helpful to sleep with pillows supporting your elbow and forearm.
10. Please call the office to schedule a follow-up appointment to have your splint and sutures removed ~7-10 days after your surgery. At this visit we will discuss the plan for your therapy and recovery. For the initial period after surgery, the most important consideration is elevation and protecting the extremity.
11. If you develop a fever (temperature greater than 101.5 F), redness or drainage from the surgical incision site, please call our office to arrange for an evaluation.
12. You will receive a prescription for a pain medication (typically either Vicodin or Percocet). These pain medications are all opioid narcotic derivatives which have potential side effects that include constipation, nausea and sleepiness. The pain medications should not be taken on an empty stomach and they should only be taken as needed for pain. Please do not take any Motrin, Ibuprofen, or Aleve (NSAIDs) as these may impair your fracture healing.

If you have any questions, please contact our office

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