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General Post-Operative Instructions

The following are general instructions that will be useful after your surgery. Unless otherwise instructed, you should follow these instructions.

Swelling – This is a natural and expected occurrence after surgery but can cause a great deal of discomfort, as well as, limit joint range of motion and flexibility.

- 1) Elevation will help reduce swelling. This is often accomplished by placing the affected arm on pillows above the level of your heart.
- 2) Ice can be applied directly over your post-operative dressing or cast. Be careful to keep the dressings dry.
- 3) If your fingers are left free move them as often as you can. They may be swollen, but moving them will actually help reduce the swelling. You may use the other hand to assist with finger motion.
- 4) The dressings should be snug. If the dressings feel too tight you can loosen and re-wrap. This may require help from another person.

Bruising - is typical and expected after surgery. It is a result of old blood coming to the surface of the skin and can be a variety of colors. It usually appears 1-2 days after surgery and lasts 2-3 weeks. There is no need for alarm.

Wound Care

For most surgeries, dressings will remain in place until the first post-op visit. For some procedures such as trigger finger and carpal tunnel releases, you will be instructed to remove the dressings at 2-5 days after surgery. Upon dressing removal if the incision is healing without oozing or gapping, you may wash the hand gently and shower without scrubbing the surgical site. The incision should not be submerged in water. A light dressing (or band-aid) can be used to cover the incision.

Medication

Pain medicine is may be given post-operatively. Please take as directed. If the medication prescribed is too strong, take half the dose (cut or break the pill in half) or take over-the-counter pain medication(s). You should resume all other medications that you normally take, unless otherwise instructed.

Therapy

Therapy is usually prescribed at the first post-operative visit, if needed. There are some procedures that require therapy to begin within the first day or two after surgery. These include, but are not limited to, tendon repair, Dupuytren's release, contracture release and tenolysis. Early therapy is very important in the success of these cases.

If you have any question, please contact the office.