

Trigger Finger Release

Postoperative Instructions for Hand Surgery

You had surgery on your trigger finger or thumb. Surgery can be done to fix all kinds of problems with the hand, such as carpal tunnel symptoms, ganglion cysts, Dupuytren's contractures, fractures of the hand or fingers or any kind of injury to the hand or fingers.

This type of surgery is usually done under a local anesthetic with sedation. Due to this type of anesthesia, you may experience numbness and tingling in your hand for 8-10 hours after surgery.

Wound Care

- Your surgical site is covered either with an ace wrap or a splint. After 72 hours this dressing can be removed. Then daily dressing changes with peroxide can be performed. Keep wound clean and dry. Do not perform any gripping, pushing or pulling activities that may stress your wound.
- To shower, you will need to place a large plastic bag over your dressing and then securely tape it in place to prevent the dressing from getting wet.
- The stitches will be removed in 10-15 days after surgery. At that point, you may start a scar massage program if you want.
- The Vitamin E oil can be purchased without a prescription or you may use the oil from a Vitamin E capsule instead.
- A thickened and tender scar will frequently develop four weeks after surgery. It is common to have pain when direct pressure is applied to the scar. This should slowly resolve over several months.

Wound Care

- Keep dressing clean, dry and intact.
- Call your doctor if you have a fever over 100.4°F.
- Call your doctor if you notice pus or red streaks coming from the wound.
- Call your doctor if you notice increased redness or swelling around the wound.
- Call your doctor if you notice increasing bleeding from the wound.

If you have any problems or questions, please call your doctor's office (8am-5pm).

Answering service for after hours.

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Medications

- It is common to encounter more pain on the first or second day due to swelling.
- Using pain medication as directed will help to control the pain.
- It is important not to drink alcohol or drive while taking narcotic medications, such as Norco or Percocet.
- Do not take Tylenol while taking narcotics, such as Norco or Percocet, as these medications contain Tylenol.

Activity

- Elevation of the hand is very important after surgery to prevent fluid from pooling in the hand, causing swelling and pain.
- To help prevent swelling and pain, keep your hand elevated higher than your heart. Wiggling your fingers or pumping your hand into a fist 10 times an hour will help circulate blood and fluid through the hand, helping to prevent swelling and pain. If you had a tendon repair, do not move your fingers unless otherwise instructed.
- You may use your hand for light activities, such as eating, dressing and personal hygiene — no heavy lifting, pushing or pulling.
- Driving is okay once you feel strong enough to safely grip the steering wheel, and are not taking pain medications.

Preventing Blood Clots

- Walking around will help the blood circulate and prevent blood clots.
- While sitting or lying down, move your feet in a circle or pump your feet up and down 10-30 times an hour.
- If you notice redness, tenderness or swelling in your calf muscles, call your doctor right away.

Diet

- Pain medications can cause constipation.
- To help prevent constipation, you can try a high-fiber diet with lots of fluids.