

Post-operative Instructions - Elbow Arthroscopy

General Instructions

- Apply ice covered with a towel to elbow for 2-3 days (15-20 minutes at a time).
- Swelling and bruising is normal. You may loosen dressing if needed.
- Low grade fevers (less than 101 degrees) are common after surgery. Deep breathing will help with this. If your fever persists for more than a few days, or the wound gets more red, call my office.
- The pain medication given to you can cause constipation, nausea and itching. You may switch to Tylenol or Motrin when more comfortable.

Exercises

- Elevate your hand/elbow above the level of your heart for 2-3 days after surgery to decrease swelling.
- If you were given a sling, this is for comfort only. Try to discontinue use of sling as soon as possible to avoid stiffness.
- Start to flex/extend the elbow as pain allows, unless immobilized in splint. Start squeezing a tennis ball for grip strength.
- Start physical therapy within 2-3 days.

Bandages

- Your dressing may show blood stains after surgery. This is expected. If the blood is still wet after the first day, call my office.
- Remove all dressings and cover wounds with band-aids after three days.
- You may shower after 3 days.
- Do not swim or submerge incisions in water for 2 weeks.

Work

- Your comfort level should be your guide for returning to work.
- Most people are able to return after the first post-operative visit.

Important

- Report any complications to my office immediately. This includes excessive bleeding, wound breakdown, increasing redness or pain, prolonged numbness or tingling, prolonged fever over 101 degrees, or increasing calf pain.
 - Call office for follow-up appointment 10-14 days after surgery (if not scheduled).