

Gordon Groh MD, MBA Post Discharge Protocol

Carpal Tunnel or Trigger Finger Office 828 252 7331

Pain

- Over 90% of patients take narcotics for less than three days after surgery
- Take over the counter Tylenol 325 tablets
 - 2 tablets every 6 hours
- If prescribed Gabapentin—take every 8 hours as directed
- If prescribed an anti-inflammatory such as Celebrex—take daily as directed
- Take Norco as needed for pain—begin as block begins to wear off or prior to first night sleep

Dressing Change

- Leave initial dressing in place for seven days—may remove and place Band-Aids.
 - Avoid any creams or ointments until the skin is healed

Bathing

- You may shower after the first dressing change five days after surgery—no tub bathing
- Keep incision clean and dry

Sling

- Wear the sling full time except for bathing. If you have bicep cramping, you may remove the sling two or three times a day to stretch the elbow for two minutes.

Driving

- May contemplate driving if patient feels safe 1-3 days after surgery. Patient must be off all narcotic pain medications
- Patient must feel comfortable handling vehicle in emergency situations

Hand Therapy

- Greater than 95% of patients will complete their postoperative course without the need to see a physical therapist. Begin work on making a full composite fist immediately after surgery. Once you can make a fist, you may work on hand strength by squeezing a ball.

Constipation

- Take over the counter MiraLAX and Senna (over the counter) twice per day while using narcotic pain medications.
- Take Colace as directed (prescription) while taking narcotic pain medications.

Swelling & Edema management

- Some swelling/edema is normal in the forearm/hand after shoulder surgery—although the amount can be variable
- Making a fist and squeezing a ball repeatedly during the day improves blood return and decreases swelling
- Elevate hand above the level of heart

Bruising/Discoloration in arm after Surgery

- Normal after surgery and blood thinners including aspirin/anti-inflammatory medications may increase bruising

Staple/Suture Removal

- Staples may be removed at the 14 days recheck if the wound appears to be healing with minimal swelling. Steri-strips are applied after staple removal and should stay in place until approximately 17 days after surgery.

Anti-Coagulation

- Aspirin 325 mg per day or Xarelto/Coumadin for higher risk patients—typical duration four weeks—if indicated

CHG/Pre-operative Wash

- All total shoulder patients will receive a CHG sponge and should wash with it the night prior to surgery

Dental Precautions

- No delays indicated for elective dental procedures.