

SVO

SILICON VALLEY ORTHOPAEDICS

Postoperative Instructions: Distal Radius Fixation

❖ GENERAL

- Your surgery was performed through an incision on the side of your wrist. You are placed in a splint that will stay on until you come for your first post-operative visit 7-10 days after surgery. The incision will usually cause a sharp pain at the front of the wrist. This will improve over the next several days.

❖ DIET

- Begin with clear liquids and light foods (jellos, soups, etc.)
- Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated.

❖ WOUND CARE

- It is normal to notice some blood on your operative dressing following surgery- if blood soaks through the bandage, do not become alarmed- reinforce with additional dressing.
- Do not remove your splint or any of the surgical dressings.
- If you note increasing drainage on the gauze, increased redness around the wound (spreading), or milky drainage from the wound, please call the office.
- You may shower the day after surgery; however, the arm must remain COMPLETELY DRY and covered.

❖ MEDICATIONS

- The incisions are injected with a medication that makes the area numb; however, this will wear off in 8-12 hours. We recommend that you start pain medications when you get home so that it's in your system before this wears off.
 - Along with this, some patients receive a block that makes the entire arm numb. This also wears off in 8-12 hours and you'll notice a difference in your pain control.
- Most patients will require narcotic pain medications for a short period of time (max. 6 weeks)- this must only be taken as prescribed/written on the bottle.

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- Common side effects of the pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation- to decrease the side effects, take medication with food- if constipation occurs, consider taking an over-the-counter laxative.

- If you are having problems with nausea and vomiting, please contact the office at (510) 739-6520 and speak with a staff member about possible medication changes.
- **Do not** drive a car or operate machinery while taking the narcotic medication.
- Ibuprofen 800mg (i.e. Advil) may be taken in between narcotic pain medication to provide baseline relief, reduce the overall amount of pain medication required, and to help increase the time intervals between narcotic medication usage.

❖ ACTIVITY

- Keep your arm in the sling at all times until the first post-operative visit except for performing the pendulum exercises seen below. Perform these exercises with the splint on.



- NO driving until instructed otherwise by physician and no driving while taking narcotic pain medications.
- May return to sedentary work ONLY or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable. If any work/school notes are needed, please contact Becca or your designated clinic (U.S. Healthworks or NMCI).

❖ SPLINT/BRACE

- Your sling can be worn as needed to help support your wrist.
- The sling can be removed for showering but keep splint dry.
- Elevate the arm above your chest while laying down if you are experiencing pain or throbbing.

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❖ EXERCISE

- Formal physical therapy (PT) will begin after your first post-operative visit and the script is sent directly to the PT location.

❖ EMERGENCIES**

- Contact Becca (cell phone: 408-707-0613) if any of the following are present:
 - Painful swelling or numbness
 - Unrelenting pain
 - Fever greater than 101.5° at least 48 hours after surgery or chills
 - Redness that is spreading around incisions
 - Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount is expected)
 - Excessive nausea/vomiting
 - Difficulty breathing/chest pain- Consider going directly to the nearest emergency room if this is persistent
- **If you have an emergency after hours or on the weekend, contact Becca on her cell number. She can connect you with me.
- ***Do NOT call the hospital or surgery center.**
- **If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention, proceed to the nearest emergency room.

❖ FOLLOW-UP CARE/QUESTIONS

- You will receive a call within 48 hours of your surgery to check on your status.
- If you have additional questions, please feel free to email them to becca.lopez@formortho.com
- If you do not already have a postoperative appointment scheduled, please contact the office during normal business hours (8:00am-5:00pm) and ask to schedule between 7-14 days after your surgery.

Please discharge patient when discharge criteria have been met. Patient is alert, oriented, and ready for discharge.

PHYSICIAN SIGNATURE

DATE

RN SIGNATURE

SVO

DATE

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