

Dr. George Sutherland

CUBITAL TUNNEL RELEASE / ORIF ELBOW

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

1. Keep dressings clean and dry.
2. You may have been placed in a post-op splint it is to stay on until your follow-up in one to two weeks.
3. You should not lift anything with your hand until directed by Dr. Sutherland or Occupational therapy.
4. You may shower, but keep the splint clean and dry. Apply ice to your wrist, hand and shoulder for 20 minutes 3-4 times daily.
5. Move your finger and thumb frequently; this reduces swelling of the hand and prevents joint stiffening
6. You will begin an Occupational therapy program soon after your fist post-op appointment.
7. If a nerve block was used during your surgery, your post-op nurse will give you an instruction sheet on what you can expect over the next 12-24 hours.
8. You will be given a prescription for pain medication. Please refer to the "Medication Instruction" sheet also given to you by your post-operative nurse. Many times after the first 3 days, the prescribed medication may not be needed. If you are having mild pain, use over-the-counter Tylenol (as directed on the box) instead of the prescribed meds, or Ibuprofen (as directed on the box).
9. Do not take any pain medication on an empty stomach. The medication may cause irritation when taken without food.

It is normal to feel pain and swelling in your elbow and hand after surgery, but call the doctor's office at (843)705-9401 if you experience any of the following:

1. Increased redness, swelling, bleeding, or pain unrelieved by medication after 2-3 doses.
2. Fever above 101 degrees
3. Signs of infection; including pus oozing from the wound, red streaks, or foul odor.
4. Chest pain or Shortness of breath- **CALL 911**

Your post-operative appointment is scheduled for _____

At _____ o'clock in the _____ office.

Nerve Block Instructions

Purpose of a Nerve Block:

You have received a nerve block today to provide you with post-op pain control. The nerve block takes away your ability to move the affected limb, feel pressure and sensation to touch, and blocks changes in temperature.

Type of Block given:

Upper Body: Interscalene Infraclavicular Axillary Bier

Pain Control:

You will feel limited movement and sensation in the affected limb from 12-24 hours. (This is an estimate, everyone is different)

When you leave the hospital be sure to have your pain medication filled, and start taking immediately as prescribed. Do not wait for the block to wear off.

If you are having a total joint as an inpatient procedure (staying overnight), your block will have worn off before you leave the hospital.

Activity:

Upper Body- Shoulders and Arms:

Keep the affected limb in the sling until full feeling returns (you may be ordered to keep it in the sling until seen by your physician depending on your surgery).

If you are in a sling, be sure that your hand and fingers are well supported, and not dangling out the end of the sling.

If you have been given an “egg crate” foam pad for your elbow, you may remove it after 24 hours. If not be sure to place a pillow under your elbow to protect your ulnar (elbow) nerve for 24 hours.

Do not allow anything hot to touch your affected limb. Your ability to sense heat has been diminished because of your nerve block.



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PAIN MEDICATION LIST

Primary Pain Medications given after surgery:

-Hydrocodone (Vicodin, Norco, or Lortab)

-Oxycodone (Percocet)

Follow the instructions on the bottle for these given medications. If the medication is not easing your pain as prescribed you may take 1 pill every 4 hours or 2 pills every 6 hours. DO NOT take it more than this, as serious health problems may arise.

If you are not taking a blood thinner or Celebrex, You may also take 2-3 Ibuprofens (Advil or Motrin), 200mg tablets every 4 to 6 hours.

Side effects of Pain Medication:

-Constipation: Take whatever works for you. There are some options below:

- Prune Juice
- Senekot
- Miralax
- Colace or Pericolace

-Nausea: If you were given a prescription for Zofran/ Phenergan, take as prescribed. If you were not given a prescription, call Sara at (843) 705-9401.

For surgeries of larger magnitude, you may have been given Oxycontin (10mg) and Celebrex (200mg).

-Take 1 Celebrex daily. Do not mix Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, ext.) if you were given Celebrex.

-If given Oxycontin, take 2 tablets daily (1 in AM, 1 in PM). Do not take more than this as it is a long lasting pain medication. You will only be given 6 pills to last 3 days. If you have pain in between these 2 doses, take the Hydrocodone or Oxycodone as prescribed above.