
Post-Operative Instructions

Finger Z-plasty with Contracture Release

Bandages & Ace Wrap:

Your post-operative dressing has several layers you need to understand in order to properly care for your upper extremity during the 2 weeks following your surgery. Your incision was closed with fine absorbable sutures that do not need to be removed. The incision line is then coated with a thin film of antibacterial ointment, Bacitracin, followed by a non-adherent mesh gauze that is easily peeled away from the skin once your dressing is taken down in the office.

The more superficial layers of your dressing contain 4x4in. gauze that is loosely wrapped with soft cotton cast padding and splinting material to keep your fingers in full extension so the soft tissues can heal. The outermost visible layer is an ace bandage.

Occasionally, there will be a small amount of blood on this dressing which is nothing to worry about, however if you see a lot of bleeding please call my office. I will remove this dressing 7-10days after surgery to examine your wounds and apply a new dressing.

Washing & Bathing:

You should keep the dressing clean and dry until I see you in the office following your surgery. A watertight plastic bag with rubber bands around the opening work well while showering. However, some find it easier to take a bath and rest the operated hand outside of the tub. The wound may not get immersed in any still bodies of water (bath, pool, hot tub, lake, ocean, etc...) until 7-10 days after your surgery. Immersion in water prior to this can cause the wound to breakdown or get infected.

Motion, Ice & Elevation:

It is extremely important that postoperative swelling is minimized so that your upper extremity does not get stiff. To help prevent swelling it is important to frequently apply ice and keep your hand elevated above your heart level for the first 48 hours after surgery. An ice pack from a store of cubes from your freezer placed in a ziplock bag work well. These should always be wrapped in a small towel like a washcloth and then applied to the dressing, 10 minutes on the front and 10 minutes on the back. This should be done roughly once an hour while awake. Never leave the ice on for more than 20 minutes and if the cold sensation becomes painful remove it immediately. The best way to achieve this is with the frequent application of ice and by keeping the hand and arm elevated.

Hand Therapy:

You will need hand therapy following surgery. When you are seen at your first post-operative appointment I will decide when it is appropriate to start.



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Michael Pensak, M.D.

The goal of hand therapy is to first assess how your body responded to the surgical procedure. Your therapist will start range of motion exercises and swelling control measures at your first visit. If they find anything unexpected they will let me know right away.

Follow up appointment:

We try to give all of our patients a follow-up office visit at the time we schedule your surgery. Sometimes I find things or do things I did not anticipate during your surgical procedure, therefore I may want to see you in the office sooner than originally planned.

Follow up appointment: _____

Medications:

Ibuprofen and/or Tylenol every 6 hours are sufficient for pain control after this procedure. Please use these agents as directed on the bottle. I do not prescribe narcotic pain killers for this surgery.

What to watch out for:

- Pain that is increasing every hour in spite of the pain medication
- Drainage from the wound more than 2 days after surgery
- Increasing redness around surgical site
- Pain or swelling your surgical site
- Fever greater than 101
- Unable to keep food or water down for more than one day

Who to call for questions or problems:

If you are having problems or there are questions you need answered then please call our office at 732-349-8454 and our staff will assist you. Our hours of operation for our phone room are as follows: Monday through Thursday 8:30am- 4:30pm and Friday 8:00am – 4:00pm.

We realize that after surgery some problems or questions are urgent and cannot wait until normal working hours. Under these circumstances we have a service that will get the message to a doctor on call for our office by calling the main number 732-349-8454.

*****If an emergency were to occur please go to the nearest ER for immediate attention.**

**Wishing you- All the Best,
Michael Pensak, M.D.**



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