



ORIF (Open Reduction and Internal Fixation) Distal Radius Fracture Dr. McCarthy's Post-op Instructions

Splint

The splint that you received in clinic today will need to be worn 24 hours a day for the next 4 weeks. You may remove the splint for bathing and 3 times a day to work on your wrist exercises. You may also remove the splint to soak your wrist in warm water or to ice it. This splint will be worn for 4 weeks, from your appointment today until you see Dr. McCarthy at your next post-op visit.

Exercises

Remove the splint to do your exercises. Begin by soaking your hand/wrist in warm water for approximately 10 minutes. The warm water helps to loosen up your muscles and makes the exercises easier to do. After soaking, spend approximately 3–5 minutes doing the exercises as directed on the accompanying handout. You can also perform your exercises during or after bathing.

Activity

While wearing your splint, you should use your hand for light activities, such as typing, writing, eating, dressing, and driving. Do not exercise your wrist more than 3 times a day, otherwise, you can overstress the fracture site and delay healing. Do not do any firm gripping, weight-bearing, or lifting/pushing/pulling of heavy objects with your hand. If you develop discomfort following an activity and your hand or wrist swells, soak your wrist in cold water to decrease the swelling.

____ If this area is checked, you also have a fracture of your ulnar styloid. This fracture is too small to fix surgically, and it will heal on its own. In addition to the above restrictions, you need to avoid wrist rotation, so that you do not irritate the fracture and cause discomfort along the ulnar (the small finger) side of your wrist.

Follow Up

You should follow up with Dr. McCarthy in 4 weeks to check your progress. As always, if you have any questions before your next appointment, please feel free to call the office and leave a voicemail message for Claire Joubert, PA-C, Dr. McCarthy's physician assistant, at 952-456-7215.