



## Post-Op Information: Splint

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### WHAT TO EXPECT THE FIRST FEW DAYS AFTER SURGERY:

- After the procedure, your hand will be bandaged in a splint. Your fingers will be free but may get stiff and sore due to swelling in the hand. You are encouraged to move and use all fingers not included in the splint for light things right away. This includes things like eating, dressing, and typing.
- Your fingers may be numb for several hours after the procedure from the numbing medication or block given by anesthesia. This will eventually resolve. Take pain medication (start with Tylenol and Ibuprofen) when the numbness **begins** to go away.
- Elevating the arm above the level of the heart during the first few days after surgery will minimize swelling. Sleep with a pillow over your chest and the arm on the pillow.
- You can apply ice packs over your splint or in your elbow crease or armpit above the splint for 10-15 minutes every hour while awake.
- Do not remove the splint. Keep the splint clean, dry and intact. The splint will be removed at your first post op appointment. Cast protectors for showering are widely available on Amazon, pharmacies or Target/Walmart.

### WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE HEALING PROCESS:

- The incisions will be healed by two weeks. Sutures will be removed at this time.
- Bones take around 6 weeks to heal.
- Tendons can take up to 12 weeks to finish healing.

### PAIN MEDICATIONS:

- Please take ibuprofen (Advil or motrin) and/or Tylenol (acetaminophen) for pain control.
  - Ibuprofen: up to 600 mg three times per day. We recommend you take this with meals.
  - Tylenol: up to 1000 mg (2 extra strength or 3 regular strength) up to three times per day.
  - You can take these medications separately but It is also safe to combine these mediations together.
- Be mindful that there is often acetaminophen included in pain medications such as Vicodin or Percocet. You can take additional Tylenol but keep track of the total amount of acetaminophen. Do not exceed 4000 mg total per day.

- We may also give you a small, one time prescription for some narcotic pain medication to use for the first 1-3 days after surgery.
- Constipation is a common side effect from the pain medication- drink lots of water and take over the counter Colace and/or Senna as directed on the bottle while taking pain medication. Miralax can also be helpful.

#### RETURN TO WORK:

- If you primarily do deskwork (typing, etc...), you may return to work within a few days.
- If you do more active work requiring heavy lifting or repetitive handling of small objects, you may not return to work until you are cleared by Dr. Bhatt.

#### FOLLOW UP:

- Please schedule a follow-up appointment 10-14 days after your procedure.
- At this appointment the wound will be checked, and stitches will be removed.
- Please schedule a second follow-up appointment with your surgeon 6 weeks after your procedure.

#### OTHER QUESTIONS?

- Infection is rare but please watch for signs and symptoms of infection and call our office immediately and arrange to be seen urgently if you experience any of the following:
  - Redness spreading beyond the area directly around the splint
  - Fever (>101.5 F)
  - Increased pain after the initial post op pain has subsided.
- Please do not hesitate to call our office with any questions or concerns or write them down and bring them to your next appointment.

## SIMPLE FINGER MOTION EXERCISES:

Perform 10 reps at least 3 times a day. It may be painful to move your fingers at first, but the pain and swelling in your fingers should improve as you do the exercises. It's okay and encouraged to use your other hand to help move your fingers into the correct position.

**Straight:** All finger joints straight.

**Tabletop:** Bend the joints where your fingers meet your hand (MP joints), keep your other finger joints (IP joints) straight.

**Claw:** Straighten the joints where your fingers meet your hand (MP joints), bend your other finger joints.

**Fist:** Bend all three joints to bring your fingertips to your palm.

