

## **Distal Biceps or Triceps Repair/Reconstruction Postoperative Instructions**

### **ACTIVITY**

- You will be non-weightbearing to your operative arm.
  - No lifting with your operative arm.
- You may move your wrist, hand, and fingers as you tolerate.

### **DRESSING**

- You will have a splint and dressing on.
  - You should use your sling as needed to support your arm.
- Please keep your splint and dressing clean, dry, and intact until your postoperative appointment.
- Your splint and dressing is not waterproof. When showering please keep your splint dry.
  - This is best done by placing a plastic bag over your arm and securing it to your upper arm with a rubber band.
  - If preferred, cast/splint showering bags can be purchased online or at a pharmacy.

### **PAIN CONTROL**

- You may have received a nerve block or local anesthetic injection. This provides excellent pain relief for the first 8-36 hours following surgery. This wears off at various times for each patient.
- You will be prescribed pain medication (outlined below) for your postoperative pain.
- We also recommend icing frequently for pain or swelling after surgery.
  - You can use any form of ice (icing machine, a bag filled with ice cubes, bag of frozen veggies, or reusable ice pack).
  - Use a protective layer (such as a dish towel) between the ice and your skin, so that you do not freeze your skin.
  - Ice for 20 minutes at a time, with at least 20 minutes off in between icing sessions.

### **MEDICATIONS**

- Oxycodone 5 mg, 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed
  - This is a narcotic pain medication for moderate to severe pain. It is our goal to wean our patients off this medication within the first week following surgery.
- Tylenol 500 mg, 2 tablets every 8 hours
  - We recommend this as a baseline pain medication for the first week following surgery.
  - DO NOT exceed 4000 mg of Tylenol in a 24-hour period.
- Ibuprofen 200 mg, 3 tablets every 8 hours
  - If you can take NSAIDs, over the counter Ibuprofen can be helpful for mild to moderate pain and can replace narcotic pain medication

- Zofran (ondansetron) 4 mg, 1 tablet every 6 hours as needed for nausea
  - This is an anti-nausea medication that can help resolve nausea associated with anesthesia and narcotic pain medications.
- Colace (stool softener) 100 mg twice daily
  - The use of narcotic pain medication can cause constipation. We suggest using an over-the-counter stool softener (Colace) while taking pain medication. Stop taking this medication if diarrhea develops.
- Resume all home medications the day after surgery.
- Variations in postoperative medications may be made on an individual basis.

## DRIVING

- You are not allowed to drive while taking narcotic pain medication.
- Dr. Schuette will discuss with you when it may be appropriate to return to driving.

## POSTOPERATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- Your first postoperative appointment will be 2 weeks after your surgery.
  - Sutures will be removed if required.
  - Your splint will be discontinued, and you will be provided with a hinged elbow brace.
- Your second postoperative appointment will be approximately 6 weeks after surgery.

## REASONS TO CALL THE OFFICE

- Please call Dr. Schuette's office (952-442-6943) if you have any questions or concerns, or develop the following:
  - Increased pain that is not responding to pain medication
  - Increased warmth or redness at the surgical site
  - Large amounts of bleeding or drainage
  - A sustained fever greater than 101° F
  - Excess pain or swelling of the calf
  - You significantly injure your operative body part