

# **CARPAL TUNNEL/GANGLION SURGERY INSTRUCTION SHEET**

Dr. Solberg's Office Number is **213-455-8448**.

This information should be useful after your hand surgery. Please read this information carefully. You will receive further instructions at your next visit. The following items cover what to expect and what to do for the first week after surgery.

## **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

Expect your hand to be quite stiff and sore for the first few days. Try to keep your arm elevated as much as possible. You should begin moving your fingers the first day after surgery.

You have been given a long acting local anesthetic around the incision. It will often last 6-8 and sometimes as long as 12 hours. It may cause part of your hand to be numb after surgery. This will subside when the local anesthetic wears off. This tends to happen very quickly so make sure you take your pain medication regularly and take an extra dose when you begin to feel the anesthetic begin to wear off. When this happens you will feel a tingling sensation in your fingers (this feels similar to when your hand falls asleep after laying on it for a long period of time).

Apply ice to your hand for the first 48 hours after surgery. You should expect some swelling in your hand and fingers on the affected side as well as some bruising in the forearm, this is perfectly normal. This will subside when you begin to move your hand more.

## **PAIN MEDICATION**

Take your pain medication as directed by your prescription. Do not wait until the pain is intolerable to take the medication. It will take between 30-60 minutes to begin working, so take it accordingly. . You may combine your pain medication with an anti-inflammatory medication for a synergistic effect (the effect of the combination is more than each of the separate components).I recommend over the counter Advil or Aleve and these can be taken safely in conjunction with your prescription. If you want to combine you prescription with Advil or Motrin, take 3 tablets (600 mg) three times a day, if you are using Aleve (naproxen) take two

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tablets (440 mg) twice a day. Make sure you take these medications with food to avoid stomach upset.

## **WOUND CARE**

Take the bandage off after 3 days. The incisions may continue to ooze a small amount. Keep the incision dry and covered with a band-aid. You can begin to wash the incision with soap and water after the bandage is removed. Do not soak your hand in water or swim in a pool until the sutures have been removed in the office.

## **MOTION AND EXERCISES**

Begin to gently move your fingers as soon as you can. Your motion should improve a little bit every day. Start by flexing and extending your fingers gently until all your motion has returned. Then begin on getting your grip strength back by squeezing gently on a soft ball or sponge. Avoid squeezing exercises until the incision has stopped oozing. Below are a set of exercises you can begin doing after you remove the bandage. Do these exercises 2-3 times a day; plan to spend about 10 minutes each time you do the exercise. Make sure you take some pain medication before you do the exercise as they may cause more irritation.

## **SLEEP AND LIMITATIONS**

If you're having trouble falling asleep you can take a gentle over the counter sedative such as Benadryl or Unisom. These can be taken safely with your pain medication and help you to fall asleep more quickly.

Don't drink alcohol with the pain medication or sleep aid as this can be dangerous.

Do not lift anything heavier than a coffee cup. You can use your arm for writing, working on the computer and fine motor tasks such as manipulating small objects but do not attempt to lift anything heavier than about a pound. This can create stress on the surgical repair and can lead to injury.

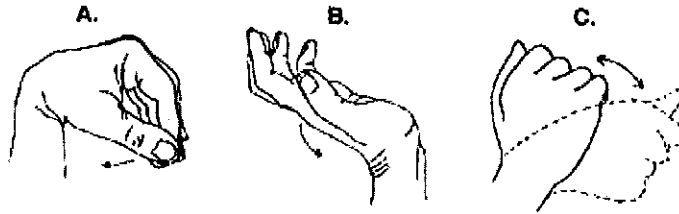
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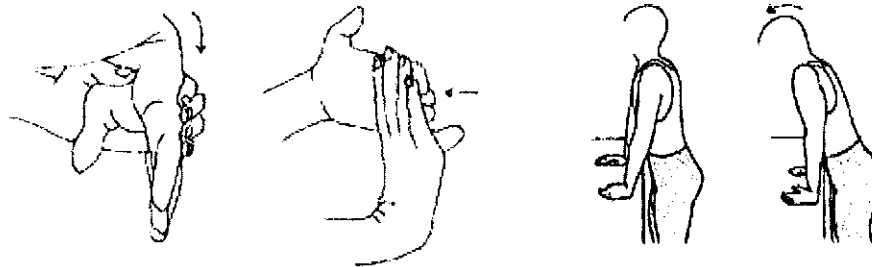
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## MOTION EXERCISES

I put some gentle wrist stretching exercises below that you can start doing once your splint comes off. If you have a splint on after surgery, just work on finger motion.



**Wrist: Active range of motion**

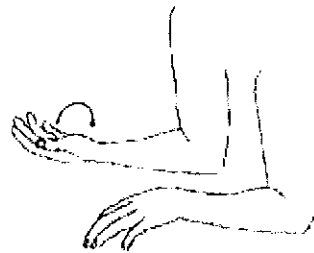


**Wrist stretch**

**Wrist extension stretch**



**Wrist flexion stretch**



**Pronation and supination of the forearm**

**Call Dr. Solberg's Office if you notice any of the following symptoms.** You may be connected with an associate if you are calling in the evening hours. Have your discharge orders and description of your procedure available.

Temperature over 101° Fahrenheit

Persistent numbness in your hand

Increasing, severe pain in the hand

Increasing redness around the incisions

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You have been prescribed pain medication which has a number of side effects. Most common are drowsiness, nausea and or vomiting, itching, constipation and irritability. If these are prolonged or severe, your pain medication may need to be changed. You must contact our office during business hours to have a prescription refilled or a new prescription dispensed. After hours (after 5:00 pm or weekends), the **on call doctor will not give you a refill** or a new pain medication prescription.

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