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## POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

### Distal Biceps/Triceps Repair

If you have any questions after surgery, call the office 713.441.667. Do not send a MyChart message.

#### DIET

- Begin with clear liquids and light foods (jellos, soups, etc.).
- Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated.

#### WOUND CARE

- Keep your operative dressing in place. Occasionally, blood may soak through the bandages. Don't be alarmed, just add a new dressing (gauze) on top.
- **Leave the splint on at all times.** The splint will be removed at your first postoperative visit.
- Keep the splint dry until the sutures are removed. Cover with a plastic bag or plastic wrap such as Press N' Seal.

#### MEDICATIONS

- Local anesthetics (pain medications) are injected in the surgical site during surgery. Also, a nerve block by the anesthesiologist may be done just prior to surgery. These medications will wear off within 8-12 hours.
- Most patients will require narcotic pain medication after surgery for several days.
- Side effects of pain medication include: nausea, drowsiness, constipation.
  - Nausea-to help prevent nausea, take medications with food. If you are having difficulty with nausea or vomiting, please contact the office, 713.441.3667.
  - Drowsiness-Be careful in regards to drowsiness and do not drive or operate machinery after taking narcotic pain medication.
  - Constipation-to help prevent constipation take a stool softener, such as Colace® 100mg twice daily. If this does not work you may take a laxative or use an enema if needed. Ask your pharmacist.
  - Unless instructed otherwise, you may take Aleve® 1-2 pills in the am and the pm or Advil® 400mg 3 times per day if needed for pain control. This may also help you wean off the narcotic pain medication.
- Please resume all home medications, unless instructed otherwise.
- With new laws in place, you will need to pick up a paper prescription for any refill of a narcotic pain medication. This medication cannot be called into your pharmacy. **Pain medications will not be refilled after hours or on the weekends. Do NOT ask for a refill of pain medication via MyChart.**

#### ICE THERAPY

- Begin ice immediately after surgery and ice continuously over the bulky dressing. Once the bulky dressing is removed you may ice for 20 minutes every 2 hours. Ice can significantly reduce the amount of pain and swelling you experience. Do not put ice directly on your skin.
- The ice machine (cryo-cuff) is a convenient way to ice, but ice packs work as well.

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**EXERCISE**

- Formal physical therapy (PT) will begin after your first post-operative appointment. You will be given the prescription for PT at that visit. The day after surgery start working on your home exercise program. Move your wrist, hand and fingers in all directions. This will help with swelling and stiffness of these joints.

**ACTIVITY**

- Sleeping will be difficult for most people for several weeks after surgery-this will get better. You will need to sleep with your brace on.
- Do not engage in activities which increase pain/swelling (squatting, running or lifting) until cleared by your physician, PA or PT.
- Avoid long periods of or long distance travel. It is recommended not travel long distances or fly for at least 2 weeks after surgery.
- NO driving until cleared by physician or PA.
- May return to sedentary work or school 3-4 days after surgery as pain permits. Many patients with sedentary jobs take 1 week off from work.

**EMERGENCIES**

- Contact the office, 713.441.3667 for any of the following:
  - Painful swelling or numbness, unrelenting pain, Fever over 101°F (it is normal to have low grade fevers after surgery), chills, painful redness around the incisions (a small amount of drainage is expected), excessive nausea or vomiting.
  - If you have difficulty breathing or another emergency that requires immediate attention, call 911 or go to the Emergency Room.
- If you have an urgent situation after hours or on the weekend, call the office at 713.441.3667, to be connected to the answering service. The on-call provider will be contacted.

**FOLLOW UP**

- You will be provided with a post-operative visit date and time in the folder you receive at the time of surgery (**see pink form in your folder**). If you have any questions regarding your post-operative course or appointment, please call the office, 713.441.3667.