

Patient Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Date of Surgery: _____

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

ELBOW SURGERY

Please note that the instructions provided below are general guidelines to be followed. However, any written or verbal instructions provided by your surgeon supersede the instructions below and should be followed.

WOUND CARE

- Maintain your operative dressing until you are seen in the office by your surgeon (7-10 days after surgery).
- Avoid submerging incisions in water (i.e., baths, pools, hot tubs, etc.) for at least 6 weeks after surgery.
- **DO NOT** remove butterfly strips (called steri-strips) from skin (if you have them).
- **DO NOT** put any creams or antibiotic ointments on the surgical incision.

SHOWERING

- You may shower **24 HOURS AFTER SURGERY** (please do not wet the surgical dressing/splint).
- **DO NOT** get the surgical dressing wet when showering.
- Please apply adhesive plastic wrap (i.e., Glad Press 'N Seal Wrap) over the surgical dressing. Carefully remove adhesive plastic wrap after getting out of the shower.
- If you have a splint, please use and apply a waterproof arm sleeve cover when showering so you do not get the splint wet.
- Once the surgical dressing is no longer in place, you can pat the surgical incisions dry after the shower and place Band-Aids over the incision sites as necessary.

MEDICATIONS

The following list of medications have been electronically prescribed to you:

- **TYLENOL (1000 mg)** by mouth, every 8 hours for up to 10 days.
- **OXYCODONE (5 mg)** by mouth, every 6 hours as needed for pain for 5 days.
- **COLACE (100 mg)** by mouth, every 12 hours for constipation.
- **ASPIRIN (325 mg)** by mouth, every 24 hours for 3 weeks for blood clot prevention.



ELBOW BRACE USE AND WEIGHTBEARING

“REPAIR” (TENDON REPAIR, RECONSTRUCTION: LIGAMENT REPAIR, RECONSTRUCTION)

- Your brace must be worn at all times except for your post-operative physical therapy and bathing. You must wear it anytime you are walking, when you are sleeping and when you are in public for 6-8 weeks. You may remove it to shower, dress and for physical therapy.
- You can remove your brace for showering, but then put it back on afterwards.
- You may initially be in a splint. You will have this splint in place until your first post-operative office visit.
- You are typically not allowed to lift any heavy items with the operative arm for the first 8 weeks after surgery.

“NO REPAIR” (ARTHROSCOPIC DEBRIDEMENT, OPEN DEBRIDEMENT)

- You may stop using your brace 3-4 weeks after surgery.
- You may begin actively moving your elbow as soon as you’re comfortable.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR ISSUES WITH THE SLING, PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE AT 201.567.5700.

CONTROLLING DISCOMFORT AFTER SURGERY

- Use your cryotherapy unit as instructed to decrease swelling and diminish pain. If you do not have a cryotherapy unit, then apply ice for 20-30 minutes at a time for 3-4 times daily.
- Pain medication can be taken every 6 hours as needed.
- Do not use NSAIDs (Advil or Aleve). You can use Tylenol in combination with your pain medication.
- Sleep with a pillow under the operative arm.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Your surgeon will guide your post-operative rehabilitation dependent on your procedure and will discuss with you when you can start.

DRIVING

- Driving is not allowed while on narcotics or if a brace is necessary.
- You will have your first post-operative visit 7-10 days after surgery.



FOLLOW-UP CARE / QUESTIONS

- At that visit, we will inspect your wounds and remove your stitches (if necessary). Several small sutures are snipped at the skin level (does not hurt).
- We will review your arthroscopic photos (if procedure was arthroscopic) to show you what was done during your surgery.

IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE AT 201.567.5700.

EMERGENCIES

CALL THE OFFICE AT 201.567.5700 IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ARE PRESENT:

- Painful swelling or numbness (note that some swelling and numbness is normal)
- Unrelenting pain
- Fever or chills (i.e., $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ — it is normal to have an elevated body temperature for the first day or two following surgery)
- Redness around incisions
- Color change in the operative upper limb, including the shoulder, arm, elbow, forearm, hand or foot
- Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
- Difficulty breathing
- Excessive nausea/vomiting
- Calf pain

IF YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY THAT REQUIRES IMMEDIATE ATTENTION, PROCEED TO THE NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM.