

Joseph J. Schreiber MD

Hand, Wrist and Elbow Surgery
SchreiberMD.com

RALEIGH ORTHOPAEDIC

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Post-Operative Instructions

(Fractures, Dupuytren, Thumb Arthroplasty, Wrist Arthroscopy, Biceps Tendon, Mucous Cyst, Tendon/Nerve Repairs)



1. **Elevate.** For the first 2 days, try to keep your hand above your heart as much as possible to minimize swelling (use pillows!). Less swelling will result in less pain. If the bandage feels too tight, you may re-wrap it if necessary.



2. **Motion.** Continue to gently use your fingers; prolonged lack of motion can cause long-lasting stiffness. Work on intermittently opening and closing the hand into a fist. While motion is encouraged, avoid any heavy lifting. Listen to your body – if it hurts, don't do it! You do not need to use a sling – it can cause unnecessary elbow and shoulder stiffness.



3. **Medication.** Take your prescribed pain medication with food to minimize nausea. Consider over-the-counter medications like Senna and Colace if you have any constipation issues. To minimize narcotic use, take ibuprofen or naproxen (NSAIDs) in addition. Try to wean off narcotics as quickly as possible. Unless specifically told otherwise, resume all of your normal medications after surgery. There is no need to stop any blood thinners before or after surgery.



4. **Splint.** Keep your bandage and splint clean and dry - cover it with a plastic bag when bathing.



5. **Swelling.** It is normal to have bruising and swelling throughout the hand or fingers. Gently moving the fingers and elevation are your best antidotes.



6. **Driving.** Do not drive a vehicle until you are off pain medication and you feel that you can safely and normally handle the vehicle.



7. **Diet.** There are no dietary restrictions, but it is generally advisable to start with lighter meals and foods.



8. **Follow-up.** Call (919) 781-5600 (ext. 5621) to schedule a follow-up visit approximately ~2 weeks after surgery. If any issues arise before that visit, call the same number and you will be directed appropriately.