

RALEIGH HAND CENTER

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Raleigh Hand Center Post-Operative Instructions

1. Please keep your hand elevated above your heart at all times for at least _____ days to reduce swelling. An arm sling is not recommended for hand and forearm surgery as it holds the hand below the heart and may cause more swelling and stiffness.
2. When sitting, lying down or sleeping, keep a pillow under the hand and forearm for elevation.
3. Keep the bandage clean and dry. Cover the bandage with a plastic bag secured with tape or a rubber band while showering.
4. If the fingers are not immobilized by the bandages, you should gently make a fist and straighten the fingers several times per day to decrease stiffness. However, if the fingers are immobilized by a splint, you should rest the hand and avoid movement of the fingers.
5. Call the office if you have severe pain, severe swelling, bleeding, vomiting, fever greater than 101 ° F, wound drainage, or other concerns.
6. Call the office if your fingertips become numb, pale, or discolored. A local anesthetic medicine is often used in surgery which causes temporary numbness in the fingers for several hours on the day of surgery.
7. If the bandage feels too tight or uncomfortable, it may be gently loosened. If this does not help, please notify us. Take care not to dislodge the plaster splint, if one is included in the dressing.
8. Some amount of pain, swelling, and bruising is normal after surgery. If the pain medication does not reasonably control your pain, notify our office. Plan ahead to avoid running out of medication during the evening or weekend. Narcotic medications will not be refilled by phone on weekends.
9. Do not smoke or chew tobacco. Nicotine can reduce blood flow to the hand and delay healing.
10. Important instructions regarding your post-op bandage:
 - Do not remove the bandage until follow-up appointment.
 - Please remove your bandage _____ days after surgery. You may gently clean the area with a clean, moist cloth, but avoid soaking the incision in water. Then cover the incision with dry sterile gauze or a Band-Aid. This should be repeated once daily. Do not apply topical ointments such as Neosporin.
 - Remove the splint while leaving the underlying gauze in place starting the morning after surgery. Move the wrist back and forth several times a day to reduce stiffness. Replace the splint at bedtime. Keep the bandage dry.

Special Instructions: