



# Post-Operative Instructions Following Carpal Tunnel Release

**Diet:** You have no restrictions on your diet. During the evening following surgery drink plenty of fluids and eat a light supper.

**Nausea:** The anesthesia may produce some nausea. If you feel nauseated stay in bed, keep your head down and try drinking fluids such as 7-up, tea, soup or other clear liquids.

**Discomfort:** The amount of pain you can expect is very unpredictable. If you have pain that cannot be controlled with the prescription that you have been given you should notify your physician. Typically, two medications will be given for post-operative pain. The first will be a pain medication for stronger pain, such as Mepergan Fortis, and the second will be for milder pain, such as Darvocet. These may be alternated and should be taken on an as needed basis but no closer than 4 hours together. You may also be given an antibiotic following your surgery to prevent infection.

**Absolutely no narcotics will be dispensed after-hours, on weekends or on holidays.**

**Activity:** You will be placed in an ace bandage and will need to keep that in place until your follow up appointment to see Dr. Powell. If the ace wrap becomes too tight you may loosen it. Please keep your dressing clean and dry. For bathing you need to wrap your hand in a garbage bag and tape around the top of it, or simply take a sponge bath to prevent getting your dressing wet. You may use your fingers to do whatever activities are needed, but please do not lift, push, or pull anything with your affected hand.

Avoiding pressure on the palm of your hand is also very important. Your sutures will remain in place for approximately 14 days, at which point they will be removed, and you will be given a glove to wear to protect your incision site.

**Ice:** You will need to apply ice to the palm of your hand. You may use Ziploc bags for this. Double bagging these usually helps the most in order to prevent condensation, keeping your dressing dry. It is very important to use ice every hour for 20 minutes at a time to help with the pain and swelling following your surgery especially during the first week. Ice is good to use at any time during your recovery if you feel your hand or fingers are still swollen.



### **Call Your Physician Immediately If You:**

- Experience chest pain, with or without deep breathing.
- Experience pain in your arm or arms that does not seem to be related to your surgery.
- Notice that your surgical site is excessively cool to the touch, is dusky in color or has numbness and tingling.
- Develop a temperature of 102° F. or higher, or start to have chills.
- Notice that the affected arm is becoming more swollen, warm, red and painful.
- Have significant bright red bleeding from the incision.
- Have discomfort (pain) that is not relieved by prescribed medication.

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If you have any problems or questions, please feel free to call our office at (479) 582-4647 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday. If you have an emergency outside of our normal office hours, go to the nearest emergency room or call (479) 433-6116.