

BROWARD HAND CENTER



PURNELL TRAVERSO M.D.

Post-op Instructions

These instructions are to compliment the information given by the nursing staff and therapists. They cover many of the common questions.

Wound Care

- Dressings are to be kept clean and dry. A small amount of clear drainage or bleeding is normal. If the ace wrap feels too tight, you may loosen it and re-wrap it.
- The dressing should remain on until you follow-up in the clinic with your surgeon about one week after surgery.
- When showering, please place a plastic bag over the arm above the level of the dressing and secure it with tape. To keep the dressing dry, you may wrap a small towel around the dressing prior to applying the plastic bag or wrap. Pat the dressing dry immediately with a clean towel if it does get slightly wet.
- If purulent drainage (thick white or greenish in color) is coming from the wound, or the wound has increasing redness, or if you are having a temperature of 101 or higher, please report these symptoms to your surgeon or the doctor on call.
- Please call our office if you have any questions regarding your restrictions. **(954-575-8056)**

Pain and Swelling

- To lessen pain and swelling, you may ice after surgery. Cover your dressing with a thin towel or pillowcase. Put the ice in a zip lock bag or towel and place over the surgical site. We recommend 20 minutes, 2-3 times per day. Do not place ice or cooling devices directly on the skin for prolonged periods of time as it may damage the skin. Some dressings may be very thick and icing may not be as efficient.

Pain Medication:

- Unless you have a contraindication/allergic reaction to NSAIDs, (Including ANY stomach problems, burning in your stomach after taking NSAIDs, history of ulcers, history of bariatric surgery), you may take anti-inflammatory medications such as Motrin, Aleve, or Ibuprofen. You can take as prescribed. However taking at least 600mg twice a day for a week after surgery is advised as first line pain management (along with plain Tylenol). This decreases both pain and swelling and reduces the amount of narcotic medication you will need during the first week after surgery. Tylenol can safely be taken together with NSAIDs in a single dose if needed.
- Plain Tylenol may be used **instead** of the prescribed *narcotic* pain medication, (they can be used interchangeably), **but prescribed narcotic medications should not be taken at the same time as the plain Tylenol**. This is because the narcotic medications already contain Tylenol.
- Narcotic pain medication may be prescribed for use upon discharge. Try to wean down as tolerated. These medications can cause **constipation** and you may want to use an over the counter stool softener.
- If a refill of medication is needed, please call the office during regular business hours, Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. NOTE: Narcotics generally cannot be called into the pharmacy and you may need to pick up a script from the office.

Other:

- Taking vitamin C tablets 500mg by mouth daily for the next two months may help with bony healing (if applicable).
- Swelling to some degree is common after surgery. To reduce swelling, elevation is very helpful. Elevate the hand above the heart level. Elevation for 30 minutes every 2 hours is a good initial recommendation. Excessive pain and swelling should be reported to your surgeon.

Driving

- To drive you must no longer be taking narcotic pain pills (plain Tylenol or ibuprofen is allowed). Also, you must feel strong and alert.

Follow-up

- An appointment should have been already scheduled for you at the **Broward Hand Center** for approximately 5-10 days after surgery. If this is not clear, please call the office to make sure your appointment is made. **(954-575-8056)**