



**Richard Kim, M.D.**

*Hand & Wrist Surgery, Congenital Hand Surgery, Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery*

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## **Post-Operative Instructions**

### **POSITION:**

Keep the operated part of your body elevated above the level of your heart as much as possible, especially at night. For example, if you had hand surgery, sleep on your back with your hand resting on 2-3 pillows by your side. If watching tv or reading a book, also prop your hand up on 2-3 pillows.

### **ICING:**

Applying a cool compress, or a plastic bag with ice wrapped in a towel, over the affected area may help relieve some discomfort. Apply for 20 minutes, but wait at least 20 minutes before re-applying. If you have a splint on, the cool compress can be placed directly onto the splint.

### **DRESSING:**

You can reinforce your dressing with tape and gauze as needed.

- If a **soft dressing** was applied after your surgery, it may be removed after 2 days. -A sticker (steri-strip) may be on top of your sutures. -If the steri-strip stays on, nothing needs to be done. -But, if the steri-strip falls off and your sutures are visible, just apply bacitracin or Neosporin on top of the sutures and cover the sutures with a bandaid or dressing.

- If a **hard splint** was applied after your surgery, keep the splint on until your first post-operative office visit.

### **BLEEDING:**

Small amounts of oozing and bleeding after surgery are normal. Staining of the dressing is not a cause of alarm. If the oozing does not stop and the dressing is soaked, please call the office for further instructions. (see reverse for more instructions)

### **HYGIENE:**

You can shower starting the day after surgery. Keep the dressing dry by taping a plastic bag over it. You can also purchase cast covers at a pharmacy or medical supply store.



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- If a **soft dressing** was applied after your surgery, it may be removed after 2 days and you may shower with the area unprotected, just dry the area after showering.
- If a **hard splint** was applied after your surgery, keep the splint on and continue to keep it dry while showering until your first post-operative visit.

**SUTURES:**

Sutures are typically removed 7-14 days after surgery

**MEDICATIONS:**

Take your pain medication or ibuprofen when you are having discomfort. Take your antibiotics until they are finished. Remember to take both medications with food so as not to upset your stomach. Please call the office with any medication issues or concerns.

**EXERCISE:**

Avoid heavy lifting and strenuous activities for 4 weeks following surgery. Also, avoid driving while on pain medications.

**DIET:**

Eat regular meals and add extra fiber to your diet. • Pain medications can cause constipation, so consider taking Metamucil or a stool softener if you are having difficulty with bowel movements. • Do not drink alcohol until after you have finished your antibiotics. • Drink a lot of fluids (8 to 10 glasses of water a day)