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Elbow Surgery: Postoperative Instructions

Diet • Resume regular diet as tolerated

- Medication** • Take 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed for pain.
- Percocet Oxycodone Norco Tylenol #3
 - You have been given a prescription for Phenergan. Fill this prescription ONLY IF you have severe nausea.
 - If you had a block, begin taking pain medicine at the first sign of return of sensation. Take medicine prior to onset of pain.
 - Other _____

Activity

- Minimize activity the day of surgery.
- Ice may initially be difficult to apply because of the thick dressings. Apply ice to the elbow 3 times per day for 20 minutes for up to 1 week.
- **DO NOT** use heat.
- **DO NOT ACTIVELY** (on your own) use your arm until you are instructed to do so.
- **DO NOT** lift anything with your operative hand.
- Open and close your hand 10 times every hour that you are awake.
- **DO NOT USE** exercise equipment unless otherwise instructed.
- Keep a pillow under your elbow while lying down or sleeping. Sleeping in an upright position (recliner) may be more comfortable.

Sling

- Maintain the operative arm in a sling/brace for comfort and remove when tolerated.
- Maintain the operative arm in a sling/brace at all times, until you are seen back in the doctor's office.

Showering

- You may shower 3 days after surgery unless told otherwise. Use a plastic bag or cast cover to protect the dressing/cast from getting wet. **DO NOT** immerse the elbow under water.
 - You may **NOT** shower or get dressings wet until after next office visit.
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Dressing Care

- Keep the dressing dry.
 - You can expect some light bloody wound seepage through the bandage. **DO NOT BE ALARMED**. This is normal.
 - If the dressing does get soaked with wound seepage, remove the dressing and replace with dry gauze
 - If the dressing does get soaked with wound seepage, place an additional bandage over the existing dressing. If you have a splint, you should never remove the splint.
 - Dressing removal:
 - Remove all dressings 3 days after the surgery. **DO NOT** remove the sutures.
 - DO NOT REMOVE** the dressings until your next office visit.
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Findings: _____

Procedure: _____

Follow-Up

- Your follow-up appointment is scheduled for _____.
 - Notify our office at **301-475-5555** for:
 - **Any fever over 101.5 degrees**
 - **Excessive bloody seepage**
 - **Numbness in the arm after 24 hours**
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- Physical Therapy**
- You will be given a physical therapy prescription to begin in 1 to 2 days.
 - You will be given a physical therapy prescription when you are seen in the office for follow-up.
 - No formal physical therapy will be needed.
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