



Duke Orthopaedics: Upper Extremity Division

Christopher Klifto, MD & Katherine Batten, PA-C

3609 SW Durham Dr, Durham, NC 27707

Discharge Instructions after Open Elbow Surgery

Dressings:

- A sling may be provided for you. If so, remain in your sling for comfort and swelling control. The more the sling is utilized with hand above heart level, the better swelling control. The sling may be removed for dressing and showering when cleared by physician.
- Leave the any splint or dressing in place until your follow-up appointment
- The dressing/splint **CANNOT** get wet. If it gets wet, please contact the office for recommendation if splint is acceptable or if it needs to be replaced.

Pain Management:

- You were given a nerve block of the operative arm that will last will last 8 hours or 2-3 days, depending on the type of block used. There should be minimal pain during this time period, but expect normal post-operative pain as the block is wearing off.
- Use ice on the elbow intermittently over the first 48 hours after surgery and as needed thereafter.
- Please resume all normal medications the day after surgery unless otherwise instructed.
- Pain medicine has been prescribed for you. Use your medication liberally as directed over the first 48 hours, and then begin to taper your use.
 - No driving or drinking alcohol while taking narcotic pain medication
- You may take Extra Strength Tylenol or Tylenol in place or in conjunction with you prescribed pain medication. Do not exceed 4,000mg Tylenol per day (including Tylenol in certain prescribed pain medications like Percocet or Norco)
- You may receive Indocin (Indomethacin) to take after surgery. If so, take as per the prescription. You **MUST** take this medication on a full stomach. If you begin to experience stomach pain, discontinue the Indocin and contact the office. **While taking Indocin DO NOT take ANY nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory pain medications: Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen, Aleve, Naproxen, or Narprosyn.**

Activity:

- Avoid weight bearing with the operative upper extremity until your follow-up appointment. Do not push or pull with that arm. Do not lean on operative side through hand or fingers.
- No lifting greater than 0 pounds.
- To prevent hand swelling: Move your fingers, squeeze crumpled magazine pages, keep your hand elevated above your elbow, and keep your elbow above your heart

Contact:

- During business hours for urgent or routine questions, call Josh at 919-403-3057
- You can also send a MyChart message to Dr. Klifto or Katie for non-urgent questions
- After hours for emergent questions or concerns call and ask for the orthopaedic resident on call: 919-684-8111
- Contact the office or emergency on-call resident if you notice any of the following:
 - Excessive redness of the incisions
 - Drainage for more than 4 days after surgery
 - Fever of more than 101.5 F

Follow-up:

You should see the doctor approximately 14 days after your surgery. A post-op appointment should already be scheduled for you. If you do not have an appointment in 2 weeks or if you need to change

ph: (919) 403-3057
fax: (919) 477-1929

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the appointment, please call 919-471-9622.