

Distal Radius Fracture Post Operative Instructions

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Please contact with questions
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Secretary: Katrina Riddick
757-321-3300

What operation did I have?

The broken bone in your wrist was fixed using a plate and screws.

What should I expect the day of surgery?

A nerve block was administered before your surgery. This will cause your arm to be numb. That usually lasts until the night of surgery or the next day. When the block wears off, the wrist is often very painful. I recommend that you begin taking your pain medication before the block wears off so that you do not "fall behind the pain". You should also take your pain medication before going to sleep.

When you get home after surgery you should try to find a comfortable place to sit still and rest. You should elevate the hand to chest level to prevent swelling, and apply ice to your bandage.

What medications should I be taking?

We will prescribe a pain medication for after surgery. You should plan to take this regularly for the first two days and then as needed. We will also provide a prescription for Zofran a nausea medication. You should only take this if needed, and may want to wait to fill the prescription only if needed.

I also recommend that you take Vitamin C 500 mg twice per day. This has been shown to decrease severe pain.

Finally, you will be given a prescription for Colace a stool softener to prevent constipation. You should take this as long as you are taking pain medication.

Should I ice my wrist?

Icing the wrist for the first two days after surgery will help decrease pain and swelling. I recommend that you ice as much as possible. However, after two hours on the ice should be removed for thirty minutes. After two days you may continue to ice the wrist if you find it helpful.

What can I do with my arm and hand?

You will not be able to move your wrist with a splint on. You should work on moving your fingers and making a fist at least six times per day. You can use your hand for picking up small objects.

Can I remove the sling?

Yes, the sling is for your comfort. You should wear it for the first two days with the hand elevated to decrease swelling. After two days you may remove the sling if you like.

Can I remove the bandages?

No, the splint will stay on for two weeks until it is removed in the office. However, if the splint is feeling very tight you should loosen it or take it off. If you have to remove the splint please notify the office.

When should I have a return appointment?

You should return to see Dr. Carofino in 12-14 days to have your stitches removed. Please call Katrina Riddick to schedule this appointment. 757-321-3300.

Can I drive?

It is your responsibility to determine if you can safely drive. You cannot drive while you are taking narcotics.

When will physical therapy begin?

Physical therapy will begin after two weeks.

If you develop signs of an infection such as fevers, increasing pain, redness at your incision site, pus drainage from incision you should notify our office immediately, or go the emergency department.