

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: UPPER EXTREMITY FRACTURE

DIET

- Begin with clear liquids and light foods (jello, soups, etc.)
- Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated

WOUND CARE

- Maintain your operative dressing/splint until your first post-operative visit
- Squeeze a ball or light object in your hand to decrease swelling of the hand and wrist. It is normal to see some swelling and bruising in the hand postoperatively

MEDICATIONS

- Pain medication is injected into the wound but this will wear off within 8-12 hours.
- Most patients will require some narcotic pain medication for a short period of time, which can be taken as per the directions on the bottle.
 - DO NOT drive a car or operate machinery while taking narcotic medication
- Primary Medication = Norco (Hydrocodone)
 - Take 1 – 2 tablets every 4 – 6 hours as needed
 - Max of 12 pills per day
 - Plan on using it for 2 to 5 days, depending on level of pain
 - Do NOT take additional Tylenol (Acetaminophen) while taking Norco or Vicodin
- Common side effects of pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation.
 - To decrease the side effects, take medication with food.
 - If constipation occurs, consider taking an over-the-counter laxative such as prune juice, Senekot, Colace (or Periocolase), or Miralax.
 - If you are having problems with nausea and vomiting, contact the office to possibly have your medication changed
 - For nausea, take prescribed Zofran
- •Ibuprofen 600-800mg (i.e., Advil) may be taken in between the narcotic pain medication to help smooth out the postoperative “peaks and valleys”, reduce overall amount of pain medication required, and increase the time intervals between narcotic pain medication usage.

ACTIVITY

▪

- Elevate the operative arm to chest level whenever possible to decrease swelling.

FOLLOW-UP CARE/QUESTIONS

- Follow up appointment: 2 weeks as scheduled
- Call (909) 862-1191 x32594 with questions during business hours or send a message using MyChart. After hours please call the after hours nurse line 1-909-793-3311 TTY 711

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS

****EMERGENCIES****

- Contact the clinic if the following occur:
- Painful swelling or numbness
- Unrelenting pain
- Fever (note – it is normal to have a low-grade fever (101° and under) for the first day or two following surgery) or chills
- Redness around incisions
- Color change in wrist or hand
- Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
- Difficulty breathing
- Excessive nausea/vomiting

Proceed to the nearest emergency room if you have an emergency that requires immediate attention.