



Plastic Surgery by Bram Kaufman, MD, FACS

Experience & Compassion

216-778-4450 Office
216-778-7800 After Hours

Post-Operative Instructions for Carpal Tunnel Surgery

DIET:

Most people can resume a normal diet the evening of surgery. If you feel queasy or nauseated, start with clear liquids or soup. Advance your diet as tolerated to a regular diet. You may experience some constipation as a result of the pain medication. I recommend a trial of over the counter laxatives such as Milk of Magnesia. If this is not sufficient, then a dulcolax tab or suppository may be necessary.

ACTIVITY:

On the day of surgery and for 2 days after, please avoid exertion, straining, bending or lifting. I encourage you to be modestly active after the first few post-operative days. Walking is perfect. Avoid exercise until we discuss it at your first post op visit. Do not use the operated hand for exercise until we discuss this at the first post op visit.

I do encourage you to use the operated hand for light tasks such as dressing, eating and writing. Open and close the fingers and thumb 10 times each hour to keep the joints moving and help reduce swelling.

Elevate the hand to help reduce swelling and pain.

WOUND CARE:

Keep dry and intact for 5 days the dressing and splint applied in the operating room. On post operative day 5, remove the splint and dressing. You may wash the hand and bathe as often as you wish after that. You can leave the dressing off or apply a large bandaid if you prefer.

You may notice some numbness in the fingers after surgery that may last anywhere from several hours to days. This is quite normal and is from the local anesthesia we use in the operating room.

BATHING:

It is fine to bathe when you feel well. Keep the dressing intact and dry the first 5 days, after that you may get the wound wet.

PAIN CONTROL:

Take the narcotic pain medicine as needed. In one or two days you will probably be able to substitute tylenol every 6-8 hours as needed. (**Do not** take the Tylenol with the Percocet, both have acetaminophen). Please do not drive until you are no longer taking the narcotic and are free of significant pain.

EMERGENCIES:

If there is a problem, please call me, my office or the resident on call. Most issues are easily addressed and do not require significant intervention.

The most common emergencies that might need attention are:

- Sudden increase in pain
- Nausea that lasts 4 hours or more and does not respond to medication
- Bleeding that is profuse and uncontrolled
- High fever lasting more than a few hours and not responding to medication
- Shortness of breath or chest pain
- Leg swelling
- Loss of consciousness

If you feel the situation is urgent, call 911 and/or proceed directly to the closest emergency room. Please call us as well.

FOLLOW-UP:

Follow-up is typically in 10-14 days and should be scheduled by calling Dr. Kaufman's office at 216-778-4450 if it has not already been arranged.

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