

Discharge Instructions Page 1

Kelly Holtkamp, M.D.

Pain Management

- Take the pain medication with food to avoid upset stomach.
- DO NOT DRIVE OR DRINK ALCOHOL while taking narcotic pain medications.
- Do not take acetaminophen (Tylenol) with the pain medication. Most pain medications already contain acetaminophen. The maximum allowable daily dose is 4000 mg in adults and 90 mg/kg in children. Taking too much acetaminophen can cause liver damage and possible death.
- Anti-inflammatory medications (i.e. ibuprofen/Motrin/Advil, and Aleve) can be very effective in controlling your pain. Do not take the medication if you have a history of kidney disease, liver disease, peptic ulcer, or are on a blood thinner (i.e Coumadin, Plavix.)
 - If you choose to take ibuprofen/Motrin/Advil, you may take up to 800 mg by mouth every 8 hours WITH FOOD. Use lowest effective dose to control your pain.
 - Do not exceed max dose (2400 mg per day) for longer than 7 days to prevent risk of gastrointestinal adverse effects (i.e. bleeding, ulcers, gastritis). Long-term use of all NSAIDs, including ibuprofen, has an increased risk of cardiovascular adverse effects such as heart attack and stroke.
- Your pain should gradually decrease and require less medication over time. As your pain decreases you should decrease the amount and frequency of your medication.

Swelling Management

- Apply a COLD PACK over the bandage for 20 minutes to decrease swelling and pain. Repeat as necessary.
- ELEVATE your extremity above the heart to reduce the swelling and pain.
- Perform RANGE OF MOTION of your fingers to reduce stiffness and discomfort. The pumping action will help reduce the swelling. Do not try to move the finger(s) if they are wrapped in a protective splint.
- If the bandage feels too tight, it is okay to loosen the bandage, but do NOT remove any splints under the bandage.

Regional Nerve Block

- The anesthesiologist may have given you a regional nerve block (an injection in your neck), to numb your hand and arm. This is to help control your pain.
- The nerve block will numb your arm for approximately 18 hours after surgery. Do NOT wait for the block to wear off to start your pain medication. It is recommended that you start your pain medication when you get home. The nerve block wears off quickly and without significant notice. Therefore, it is important to have some pain medication in your system before the block wears off to ease the pain.
- It is important to protect the arm from harm while it is numb. For example, avoid exposure to hot liquids to prevent burns.
- Expect the arm to be very weak as long as there is any numbness present. Do not try to use the arm while it is still numb.

Discharge Instructions Page 2

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Diet

- Start with soft, non-dairy, bland foods. Gradually advance your diet as tolerated.
- If you are experiencing nausea or vomiting, stop solid foods. It is okay to continue non-carbonated liquids (Water, Gatorade) as tolerated.

Bandage

- Do NOT remove the surgical bandage. The purpose of the bandage and splints are to immobilize and protect the surgery area, and to promote healing.
- Keep the bandage clean and dry. If your bandage or splint becomes wet or dirty, please call the office to arrange a dressing change.
- For showering or bathing, wrap the bandage with a plastic bag. Reusable cast covers are available at most pharmacy stores. Or you can use newspaper bags or veterinarian gloves (Sold at Farm and Fleet). Seal the bag with a rubber band, tape, or GLAD Press'n Seal®.
- ARM SLING: The arm sling is to be used as needed. The arm sling is used when ambulating for a prolonged period of time to help keep the arm elevated to reduce swelling. During rest, the arm sling is removed to allow gentle motion of the upper extremity to prevent joint stiffness.

Contact the physician office (815) 455-0800 if:

- SIGNS OF INFECTION: These include increasing redness, swelling, warmth, tenderness or pain, a red line extending from the wound or bandage, pus-like discharge or a temperature of 101 degrees or higher.

Occupational Therapy

Date: _____ Location: Crystal Lake Office
Time: _____ Algonquin Office
Other: _____

- Please call (815) 444-8037 to schedule an appointment to start your therapy. Your first appointment should start 10-14 days after your surgery, unless instructed otherwise by Dr. Holtkamp.
- No therapy needs to be scheduled. Dr. Holtkamp's staff will discuss when to initiate therapy with you at your first follow-up appointment.

Follow-up Appointment

Date: _____ Location: Algonquin
Time: _____

- Please call (815) 455-0800 if you do not have a follow-up appointment. Schedule an appointment _____ days after surgery.