

## Post-Operative Instructions: Carpal Tunnel Release

### Coming Home

- You should wear your wrist brace in the early post-operative period for comfort. Keep your surgical dressing clean and dry.
- Wear your sling for support when walking around. You remove your sling for comfort when seated or at rest/sleeping.
- It is important to move your fingers to minimize swelling and stiffness there. It is normal for swelling to accumulate in the hand/fingers after arm surgery.

### Dressings/Hygiene

- Keep your dressings dry and intact until 5 days after surgery, at which point they can be removed.
- Sponge baths, or careful showering with a protective waterproof bag, are recommended until your dressing is removed. Entering a shower creates a risk of getting the dressing wet.
- If there is some drainage from the surgical wound after the dressing is removed, apply some sterile gauze squares and ace wrap or bandage tape. Change daily until the wound is dry.
- Once the wound is dry, use bandaids to cover the wound to protect it from rubbing by the brace.

### Medications

- **Acetaminophen (Tylenol):** This medication helps with pain. It should be taken on a scheduled basis (1000 mg every 8 hours) for as long as needed.
- **Oxycodone / Tramadol / Hydrocodone:** These are narcotic medications that can be taken as needed for pain control. You should taper off and discontinue these medications as soon as you feel you no longer need them.
- **Meloxicam / Ibuprofen:** These are anti-inflammatory medications that help with pain and swelling. You should take the medication as prescribed on a scheduled basis at least until you are off narcotic pain medication. You may keep taking the anti-inflammatory for as long as it is required to manage your pain, but it should not be taken longer than necessary.
- **Gabapentin:** This medication helps diminish pain signals along the sensory nerves. If prescribed, it should be taken as prescribed on a scheduled basis at least until you are off narcotic pain medication. You may keep taking the gabapentin for as long as it is beneficial.
- **Aspirin / Rivaroxaban (Xarelto) / Enoxaparin (Lovenox):** You may have been prescribed one of these medications to help lower the risk of blood clots. If prescribed, it is important to take the full amount of medication. The over-the-counter aspirin dose is 325 mg daily for 30 days.

### Follow-up and Contacts

- In most cases, your first post-operative visit has already been scheduled. It is typically 10 to 14 days after surgery.
- Physical therapy may be recommended. Dr. Gross will review this with you at your follow-up visit.
- If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call:

Laura Cook, MA (303) 607-6348

Main Office (303) 449-2730