



CONNECTICUT  
CENTER FOR  
ORTHOPEDIC  
SURGERY, LLC

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Orthopedic Surgeon

www.OrthoOnTheWeb.com

Patient Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## CARPAL TUNNEL RELEASE POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

**Dressing & Activity:** After your carpal tunnel release, you will be placed in a bulky dressing. This should remain in place for 48 hours. After that time, the dressing may be removed and you may use the hand as tolerated. Once the dressing is removed, you may shower. Cover the small incision with Band-Aids after the shower. Try to keep the incision dry. But if it does get a little wet, clean it with rubbing alcohol, allow it to air dry and cover with a Band-Aid. The wound should be cleaned with alcohol daily and covered with Band-Aids after the dressing is removed.

You are encouraged to use the hand as tolerated as your pain permits. Overprotecting the hand will lead to a prolonged recovery. Keep the sutures or Steri-trips intact and covered with a Band-Aid. It is normal for the hand to be painful after surgery. Some stiffness is to be expected.

You may return to work as soon as you are comfortable. This may be as soon as 1-2 days but rarely longer than 3 weeks. Sensitivity of the incision is common and may become noticeable at about 4 weeks post op and may last for several weeks. If this occurs, massage hydrocortisone cream (available over the counter) into the incision 3 times per day. You are encouraged to use the hand as much as you can during this time.

You may resume driving when you are no longer taking narcotic pain medications and when you have adequate control of your arm so that you can use the arm with minimal discomfort. This is a matter of your safety and the safety of those around you on the road.

**Medications:** You may resume your normal medications that you took prior to surgery. If you are able to tolerate aspirin, take one tablet (325 mg) daily until you have resumed normal activity or are seen in the office. Your prescription for pain medication should be filled after you leave the Ambulatory Surgery Center. Medication refills will only be done by me or my office during the week from 8am - 4pm. Narcotic pain medications will not be refilled after 4 pm or on the weekends. **Plan ahead.**

Medications for postoperative pain are as follows: \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 pills every 4 hours if you have pain.

If you are **not** taking the above narcotic medications, you may take Extra-Strength Tylenol as directed on the label. You may take over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medications such as Advil or Aleve if you know you can tolerate those medications and are not taking blood thinners.

Once the nerve block begins to wear off, start your pain medicine.

**Follow up:** Make an appointment to be seen approximately ~10 days after surgery. I will discuss the procedure and the findings during surgery at this visit.

**Problems:** Complications from surgery can occur and you must be aware of the early warning symptoms of some of the more serious problems that may arise. The risk of surgery is never "zero". Call the office for a temperature over 101 degrees, pain not controlled by the pain medication, or drainage from the incision.

**CALL THE OFFICE OR EMERGENCY ROOM IF ANY OF THE ABOVE PROBLEMS OCCUR.**

If you have any questions or problems, please call the office. The office is open Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm and can be reached at 860-649-2267. After hours, you may call to speak with the covering doctor for any problems.