



P: (843) 353-3460 | F: (843) 353-3461

Ulnar Nerve Transposition Postoperative Instructions

Diet

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

Wound Care

- Maintain your operative dressing, loosen bandage if swelling of the hand occurs
- It is normal for the elbow to bleed and swell following surgery. If blood soaks through the bandage, do not become alarmed, reinforce with additional dressing
- To avoid infection, keep surgical incisions clean and dry – you may shower by placing a plastic covering over the surgical site beginning the day after surgery. NO immersion of the arm.
- Elbow will be immobilized in a splint/sling following surgery do not remove until post op appointment 7-14 days following surgery.
- You may begin showering and getting your wound site wet after your first post-op appointment.

Medications

- Local anesthetics are injected into the wound at the time of surgery. This will wear off within 8-12 hours and it is not uncommon for patients to encounter more pain on the first or second day after surgery when swelling peaks.
- Most patients will require some narcotic pain medication for a short period of time – this can be taken as per directions on the bottle.
- Primary Medication = (Oxycodone)
 - 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
 - Tylenol 1000 mg three times a day
 - Ondansetron (Zofran) take as needed for nausea
 - Docusate sodium (Colace) as needed for constipation
 - Meloxicam two times a day for 2 weeks
- Common side effects of the pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation. To decrease the side effects, take the medication with food. If constipation occurs, consider taking an over-the-counter laxative.
- If you are having problems with nausea and vomiting, contact the office to possibly have your medications changed.
- Do not drive a car or operate machinery while taking the narcotic medication

- For 2 weeks following surgery take one aspirin daily to lower the risk of developing a blood clot after surgery. Please contact the office should severe distal arm pain occur or significant swelling of the distal arm/hand occur.

Activity

- When sleeping or resting, inclined positions (i.e.: reclining chair) and a pillow under the forearm for support may provide better comfort.
- Do not engage in activities which increase pain/swelling. Unless otherwise instructed the arm should remain in the sling at all times.
- Avoid long periods of sitting or long distance traveling for 2 weeks.
- NO driving until instructed otherwise by physician
- May return to sedentary work ONLY or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable

Immobilizer (if prescribed)

- You will be placed in a post mold splint where you cannot straighten your elbow for 1-2 weeks following surgery
- You are to wear sling at all times while the splint is in place

Ice Therapy

- Icing is very important in the initial post-operative period and should begin immediately after surgery.
- Ice packs 20 minutes every 2 hours daily until your first post-operative visit. Care should be taken with icing to avoid frostbite to the skin.

Exercise

- Begin finger flexion and extension on the first post-operative day to help decrease swelling.
- Formal physical therapy (PT) and occupational therapy (OT) typically begins after your first post op appointment. A prescription and protocol will be provided at your first post-op visit.

Emergencies

- Contact Dr. Gehrman or his clinical assistant at (843) 353-3460 if any of the following are present:
 - Painful swelling or numbness
 - Unrelenting pain
 - Fever (over 101°F - it is normal to have a low grade fever for the first day or two following surgery) or chills
 - Redness around incisions
 - Color change in wrist or hand

- o Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
- o Difficulty breathing
- o Excessive nausea/vomiting
- **If you have an emergency after office hours or on the weekend, contact the same office number 843-353-3460 and you will be connected to our page service – they will contact Dr. Gehrman or one of his colleagues if he is unavailable. Do NOT call the hospital or surgical center.
- **If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention, proceed to the nearest emergency room.

Follow Up Care + Questions

- A member of Dr. Gehrman's team will call you 24 to 48 hours after surgery to address any questions or concerns. If you have not been contacted within 48 hours of surgery, please call the office at 843-353-3460.
- Typically the first post-operative appointment following surgery is 10-14 days following surgery.
- If you do not already have a postoperative appointment scheduled, please contact the office during normal office hours (843-353-3460) and ask for appointment scheduling.
- The first post-operative appointment will be with myself or one of the Physician Assistants. They will assess the wound, go over post-operative protocol, and answer any questions you may have regarding the procedure.

ULNAR NERVE TRANSPOSITION PT PROTOCOL

Name: _____ Date: _____

Diagnosis: _____

Date of Surgery _____

Frequency: 1 2 3 4 times/week

Duration: 1 2 3 4 5 6 Weeks

Week 1:

- Splint at 90 degrees elbow flexion with wrist free for motion
- Compression dressing
- Exercise: gripping exercises, wrist ROM, shoulder isometrics

Week 2:

- Remove splint for exercise and bathing
- Progress elbow ROM (passive ROM 15-120 degrees)
- Initiate elbow and wrist isometrics
- Continue shoulder isometrics

Week 3-6:

- Progress elbow ROM, emphasize full extension
- Initiate flexibility exercises for
 - Wrist extension-flexion
 - Forearm Supination-pronation
 - Elbow extension-flexion
- Initiate strengthening exercises for
 - Wrist extension-flexion
 - Forearm Supination-pronation
 - Elbow extension-flexion
 - Shoulder program

Weeks 6

- Continue all exercises listed above
- Initiate light sport activities

Week 8:

- Initiate eccentric exercise program
- Initiate plyometrics exercise drills
- Continue shoulder and elbow strengthening and flexibility exercises
- Initiate interval throwing program

Week 12:

- Return to competitive throwing