DELAWARE ORTHOPAEDIC SPECIALISTS

Discharge Instructions for Open Elbow

Diet: Start out with liquids and progress to your regular diet as you tolerate.

Activity: Do not perform any strenuous activity until cleared by your Doctor. If you have a splint/cast on, you should leave on until seen by your Doctor.

Pain Medication: A prescription was electronically sent to your preferred pharmacy the day before your procedure. Take this medicine for severe pain only. You may also use Advil/Motrin, an over the counter medication if you choose. Any activity that requires precise thinking and accuracy must be avoided while on narcotics after surgery, which includes operating machinery and/or driving a vehicle.

Ice: Ice is an excellent source of pain relief, swelling, stiffness and inflammation. Use it for a 20 minute duration a few times per day. The ice pack should never be placed directly on the skin. It can be used for several weeks as needed.

Return Visit: Your post-op appointment with your Doctor has been scheduled and is listed in the paperwork that you should have received in the mail and on your discharge packet. If you need to change the date and/or time, please call (302) 655-9494.

Emergency or Problems: DOS staff is available 24 hours a day in case you experience any problems once you leave the hospital. After hours, please call (302) 655-9494 for assistance.

Wound Care: Your incision is closed with sutures and steri-strips. It will usually drain or leak after you have returned home. Do not become alarmed unless you consider the volume or color of the drainage to be excessive. Starting 48 hours after your surgery, you should take the dressing off, DO NOT remove the steri-strips and/or sutures, and apply a fresh dressing. You will need to keep your incision away from water until your stitches or staples are removed.

Showering: You should never take a bath, use a hot tub, or go swimming until instructed to do so. You may shower only if you keep the incision completely dry. Waterproof dressing can be purchased at your local pharmacy. (ie Tegaderm)

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Suture Removal: Your sutures or staples will be removed at 10 days to 2 weeks after your procedure.

Surgery Supply Info

Upper Extremity Surgery

- Be prepared that you may not be able to lift your arm up to wash you face or hair for a period of time
- A place to sleep comfortable, as sleeping when lying down may be uncomfortable (use of a recliner)
- Waterproof bandages (Tegaderm) to cover wound when showering. They can be found at your local pharmacy.
- Extra ice pack (one (1) pound bag of peas or corn works great.) Ice pack should not be placed directly on skin.
- A means of transportation, you may be limited from driving for a period of time. Due to multiple reasons, not able to drive while on Narcotics, no use of arm to drive safely, etc…
- Stress ball to work on gripping exercises post surgery

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Open Elbow Surgery Guideline

Day 1

- **Take Dressing off**
- **OK to do ROM**
- **NO Lifting more than a coffee cup**
- **Ice on and off for 20 min every hour (cover the skin)**

Day 2 – Week 6

- **OK to continue with ROM**
- **Work the hand and wrist with a stress ball**
- **No lifting more than a coffee cup**