

**Post Operative Instructions**  
**Dr. Justin Newman M.D.**  
**Elbow Surgery**

**Diet:**

- ▶ Start with clear liquids and light foods (jello, soup, etc)
- ▶ You may progress to your normal diet as you tolerate

**Wound Care:**

- ▶ Keep your operative dressing in place. If there is swelling or numbness of the hand or arm, adjust the sling or dressings as needed.
- ▶ Bleeding and swelling are normal after surgery. Some blood may soak the bandage. If this occurs do not become alarmed. Please reinforce with additional dressings.
- ▶ Steri-Strips may cover your wounds. These small strips of adhesive help protect the wound. Allow them to **remain in place** until your post operative visit (10-14 days after surgery).

**Ice Therapy:**

- ▶ Begin **immediately** after surgery
- ▶ This will greatly aid in controlling pain and inflammation
- ▶ Use ice or the prescribed ice machine for a minimum of **20 minutes 5-6 times per day**
- ▶ Apply a thin towel or pillow sheet between the ice and your skin to prevent burning the skin
- ▶ Remember to support the limb while icing
- ▶ Ice as much as you tolerate for the **first 14 days**

**Sling/Immobilizer:**

- ▶ Sling, with abduction pillow, if provided, should be worn at all times (except for dressing, hygiene, and exercises.
- ▶ Keep your elbow position against the pillow, even with your side, or in front of this position to minimize stress on the repair.

**Activity:**

- ▶ Keep splint in place at all times as directed.
- ▶ You may return to work only or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable.
- ▶ Desk work/computer use is allowed. Use your non-operative extremity to place your operative extremity on the desk or keyboard and allow it to fully rest there without your own muscles to keep it in position.

**Physical Therapy:**

- ▶ **Your first therapy visit should be as soon as possible after surgery.**
- ▶ You will be given a specific protocol for rehabilitation that will help maximize your recovery and surgical outcomes. These have been developed to provide the best outcomes possible.

**Ted Stockings:**

- ▶ These compressive stockings/socks are to be worn for 2 weeks after surgery
- ▶ They aid in the control of lower extremity swelling and decrease the chances of blood clot formation
- ▶ You may remove for hygiene, but should be worn at all other times

### Medications:

- ▶ Nerve blocks and injected anesthetics, if used **will wear off from 6-24 hours after surgery**
- ▶ Narcotic pain medications are often prescribed to aide in controlling your post operative pain. Their length of **use is typically 1-3 days**, depending on the level of pain
- ▶ Narcotic pain medications **will not alleviate all of your discomfort**
- ▶ **Ice and elevation** will aide in additional pain control
- ▶ Take medications as prescribed
- ▶ **Do not mix with alcohol**
- ▶ Common side effects of narcotic pain medications include
  - ▶ Nausea- Take medication with food. If prescribed you may use anti-nausea medication. If nausea persists call the office to consider having the medication changed.
  - ▶ Drowsiness
  - ▶ Constipation- if this occurs consider taking over the counter laxatives such as prune juice, Senekot, Colace, or Miralax
- ▶ **Do not drive a vehicle or operate heavy machinery while on narcotic pain medications**
- ▶ Narcotic medications **cannot** be called into the pharmacy. They will require a hand written prescription from the office. Please monitor the amount of pain medications you have remaining in order to not run out
- ▶ Narcotics and pain medications **will not be refilled on weekends or after hours**

### Emergencies:

- ▶ Contact Dr. Newman or his staff members if **any of the following are present**
- ▶ Painful swelling, numbness, or any abrupt change in the nature or severity of pain.
- ▶ Fever **over 101.5 degrees F** (It is normal to have a low grade fever for the first day or two after surgery)
- ▶ Redness around incisions
- ▶ Color change in extremity (*Please be aware that the skin prep in surgery may have an orange, brown, or blue tint*)
- ▶ Continuous drainage or bleeding from the incision (occasional drainage is expected)
- ▶ Difficulty breathing or excessive nausea/vomiting
- ▶ If you have an emergency after office hours or on the weekend, call (303) 344-9090 to be connected to our pager service. They will contact Dr. Newman or one of his colleagues. **Do not** call the hospital or surgery center!
- ▶ **If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention, proceed to the nearest emergency room**

### Follow-up and Questions:

- ▶ During normal business hours, Dr. Newman, Andrew Gardner PA-C, or their point of contact Venita can be reached at **(303) 344-9090**
- ▶ If you do not already have a post-operative appointment scheduled, please call d to schedule
- ▶ **Your first post-operative visit should be 10-14 days after surgery**
- ▶ Depending on the procedure plan for follow-up visits at **6 weeks, 3 months, and 6 months** after surgery.

*Dr. Newman strives to take **exceptional** care of his patients. If there are any concerns, difficulties, or problems please let him know. He wants to work with you to achieve the best possible outcomes. This is best obtained with an open line of communication.*

***Wising you a quick and successful recovery.***

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